

STAR WARS[®]

EDGE[™] OF THE

EMPIRE

MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN



Adventure Module

STAR
WARS[®]
ROLEPLAYING

STAR WARS[®] **EDGE[™] OF THE** **EMPIRE** **ROLEPLAYING GAME**

MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN

*In the far-flung reaches of the Outer Rim, a band of space pirates calling themselves the **VEILED SORORITY** singles out the **ZANN CONSORTIUM** and its lucrative smuggling operation.*

***TYBER ZANN** himself has issued a large bounty on the Sorority's self-proclaimed **PIRATE QUEEN**, wanted dead or alive—Imperial Peace-Keeping Certificate optional. Bounty hunters flock to **Taleucema** in the crater-ridden wilds of **Saleucami** to find the trail of their elusive mark....*

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MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN

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Engineering report, sir," Ensign Narish announced, and Captain Riles spun his chair around to face her. "Minor fluctuation in the portside engine's output, but the chief says it won't cause too much trouble before Saleucami."

Riles nodded as he took the datapad from the young Twi'lek. "Well done, ensign," he said, signing off on the report and handing the datapad back to her. Riles turned back to the ship's console, but Narish still stood at attention.

"Is there something else?"

Narish nodded. "Zevrix has received a transmission from Ryloth, sir. There are reports of pirate activity along our route. Shall we raise the convoy's alert status?"

The captain blinked at her question. "Pirates?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes, captain," Narish said. "The communiqué warns all ships in the area to be on guard."

Riles laughed. "No pirate would be foolish enough to attack a Consortium convoy," he replied. "Zann's got them all tied up in his webs."

"But the communiqué came from *Ryloth*, sir," she said, stressing the planet's name. Any message from Ryloth, Consortium headquarters, was as good as from Tyber Zann himself.

"I've made this run a dozen times, ensign," Riles said, his voice echoing louder than he intended. He caught himself, and reassured her, "We've nothing to be afraid of."

His words sounded hollow. Everyone aboard the *Censure* had heard rumors about the recent attacks; a vicious band of buccaneers had even dared to capture one of the Consortium's own transports. Hushed voices around galley tables spoke of the transport's crew, butchered to the last when they refused to heave to and take on boarders.

Those worried whispers could not say which ship had been taken, and until now there had been no proof, but the communiqué from Ryloth gave the tales an air of legitimacy. Riles glanced surreptitiously at the crew—every eye was upon him. Blast Narish! Blast Zevrix, too!

"Very well, ensign," he nodded. "Raise the alert status to ready. Will that suffice?"

Narish, relieved, nodded. "Aye, sir," she said.

"Inform all sections of the change." *Get out of my sight*, he thought as she scurried away to her station. *She'll feel more the fool once we've docked securely in—*

"Unknown vessel emerging from hyperspace, Captain," Ops Officer Vensin interrupted a bit too loudly. "And another...two more, sir!"

Riles closed his eyes and rubbed his temples. It was like a self-fulfilling prophecy. "Raise shields," he ordered sullenly. "Increase speed to flank. Gunners to their stations."

"Aye," Vensin replied. "Two more ships, captain! That's five altogether."

"I can count, Vensin, thank you." Riles pulled up his own display and glanced over the sensor readings. Five ships, one of them a *Consular*-class cruiser, were maneuvering into attack position.

Zevrix chimed in from the comm station, his Verpine voice sounding out the words in clicks and buzzes. "They are hailing us, captain."

"Don't keep them waiting, then," he replied. "Put it on speaker."

A burst of static assaulted the bridge, then silenced. "This is the captain of the *Renegade's Blood*," announced a feminine, whispering voice. "Order your vessels to heave to and prepare to be boarded. You have one standard minute to comply."

Riles opened his mouth to answer, but the signal had already been dropped. No chance for parley, then, he thought as he chewed his lower lip. No Consortium threats or bribes would be offered or accepted today.

"Send an encoded transmission to the rest of the convoy," Riles instructed Zevrix. "Order them to repel all boarders. Any captain who surrenders to these scum will be executed by me personally."

"But sir!" Narish objected. "You've heard the stories! If we don't surrender, they'll kill us all!"

Under normal circumstances, Riles might have shot Narish for her insubordination. Instead, he smiled and slowly shook his head. "And what do you think Tyber Zann will do to us if we submit?"

Narish's blue skin paled.

"Sit down, ensign," Riles ordered her. "If we're dead either way, let's make them pay for the privilege."



INTRODUCTION

MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN is a full-length adventure in the *Star Wars: EDGE OF THE EMPIRE* Role-playing Game line, featuring shadowports and space pirates, bounty hunting and swashbuckling action. The Zann Consortium has placed a massive bounty on the elusive Pirate Queen, whose rival fleet, the Veiled Sorority, has been a constant nuisance despite multiple assassination attempts. The Player Characters soon discover that the job is not as simple as it seemed, and that collecting their reward requires more than a fast ship or disintegration beams.

The initial plot hook is designed so that Game Masters (GMs) can easily integrate **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN** into an existing campaign, or use it as the prologue for a new series of adventures with a smuggling or pirate organization on the Outer Rim. Game Masters can also find detailed location information about the capital cities on Saleucami and Ord Mantell, with plenty of inspiration and adversaries for their own current campaigns on either planet.

In this introduction, the GM can find the following information to help prepare for the campaign:

- **Adventure Overview:** A summary of the adventure's overarching plot.
- **Adventure Background:** Information describing the circumstances and rivalries leading up to the events in **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**.
- **Important Characters:** A list of recurring Non-Player Characters (NPCs) who are allies or enemies of the Player Characters (PCs)—and who sometimes might be both.
- **Adventure Summary:** An episode-by-episode guide to the general progression of the adventure.
- **Game Preparation:** Instructions on how to use this book and tips for running this adventure.

Players who continue reading beyond this point risk spoiling the adventure for themselves.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN is the twisting tale of a large bounty placed on an especially tricky and enigmatic target. The PCs begin their search in **Episode I** for the Veiled Sorority pirate leader who has been raiding the Zann Consortium's ships and Saleucami installations. They defeat her, only to find out the true Pirate Queen is still at large and wreaking havoc on the Consortium. In **Episode II**, the PCs travel to Worlport on Ord Mantell, where they infiltrate the Queen's underground palace and unravel the mystery behind her reappearance: the Pirate Queen is not just one person, but a title and persona handed down from Queen to Queen. Finally, in **Episode III**, they must board the true Queen's flagship, the *Renegade's Blood*, amid a raging space battle, and decide whether to put an end to the legend once and for all—or to become a part of it.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As much work as there is to be had for smugglers across the galaxy, the best and most lucrative hyperlanes are fiercely competitive, and rival organizations often resort to piracy and violence against their own kind. The Zann Consortium and the Veiled Sorority have been at each other's throats for months now.

Insulted and enraged by the Sorority's attacks, Tyber Zann has instructed his lieutenant Venlana to post an outrageously high bounty on the Pirate Queen's head. Once the PCs find out about the listing, Venlana arranges to meet with them on Saleucami, where the Pirate Queen has been staging most of her attacks.

THE VEILED SORORITY

The Veiled Sorority is a secretive pirate organization that was formed in 30 BBY, eight years prior to the Clone Wars. Active solely in the Outer Rim, the Sorority does little to advertise its presence to the authorities, much less to the public at large. In its efforts to bring order to the galaxy, the Empire does not often distinguish between individual pirate bands. This relative anonymity serves the freebooters of the Sorority well, especially considering their preference for preying on their fellow criminals.

Created by a mysterious human female known only as the Pirate Queen, the Veiled Sorority was established to serve as a profitable, and largely anonymous, criminal endeavor. The Queen leads the Sorority, and is assisted by a council of captains and advisors—all female—in determining rich targets and future sources of plunder. While the Queen's captains are well known by their crews, the Queen has always kept her identity a secret by wearing an elaborate mask.



Though non-females of any species are allowed to join the Sorority, they can never aspire to positions of leadership in the enigmatic organization. Despite this, the vast majority of the Sorority's rank and file consists of men. Humans are the most numerous species within the Sorority, though a good number of near-human and alien species make up the difference.

The Veiled Sorority has always been willing to offer mercy to targets that surrender to it without a fight. This benevolence is tempered by the fact that the Sorority has no compunction about executing every last person aboard a ship that resists its boarding attempts. As the Sorority has increased its visibility in recent years, this reputation for both mercy and brutality has served it well.

Much of the Sorority's fleet comprises vessels taken as prizes. Taking ships in this way also precludes the necessity of ferrying their cargoes from one ship to another. In the rare case of a ship that is too badly damaged, the Sorority usually scuttles its cargo—along with whatever living crew remains aboard.

MOTIVE OR MISCHIEF?

Until recently, the Veiled Sorority had been reluctant to single out any particular group for its attention, and its reasons for suddenly focusing on the Zann Consortium's assets are unknown. Information brokers suspect that the Sorority has been contracted by another criminal organization to undermine the Consortium's business in the Outer Rim. Given that the Consortium has few allies, and even fewer friends, this is entirely possible. The other major underworld operations—the Crymorah, the Hutts, the Pykes, and Black Sun—have little love for Tyber Zann, whom they view as an opportunistic upstart.

Game Masters should feel free to elaborate upon the history of the Consortium and the Sorority if they so choose. Perhaps one of the Queens had a personal relationship with Tyber Zann that went sour, or had a personal vendetta against him for other reasons.

Regardless of the truth of the matter, the Zann Consortium continues to suffer from the depredations of the Veiled Sorority. Though the loss of one or two shipments is expected in any smuggling operation, the Sorority's continued focus on the Consortium can be nothing short of an open declaration of war.

THE QUEEN'S SECRET

The Pirate Queen rules the Veiled Sorority until the day she dies, and this is well known to even the lowliest Sorority scalawag. What isn't publicly known is that the Queen who currently rules over the Sorority is not the same one who started it years ago. In fact, there have been two other queens in the interim; each has taken up the mantle and mask of the Pirate Queen before relinquishing it to a successor.

Successors to the throne are chosen from the Veiled Sorority's council of captains and advisors. A successful queen is able to retire whenever she so chooses, taking any riches she has personally accumulated with her and naming her own successor. A queen who is unsuccessful—in external piracy or internal politics—is removed by the council. Depending on the circumstances, such queens are either forcibly retired or put to death, and the council chooses a new queen.

The Queen's single badge of office is her mask—an elaborate platinum visor that is both a work of art and a technological masterpiece. When one queen succeeds another, the mask is handed from one monarch to the next. Once the mask has been passed on, the new Queen takes on the previous one's identity. To keep the Queen safe from threats, a number of masked decoys are chosen—again from the council—to assume her identity throughout the Outer Rim. In this way, her exact location and identity is never known for certain.

PCs who attempt a **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Knowledge (Underworld) check** can reveal the following information about the Veiled Sorority:

- ☆: The Veiled Sorority is a pirate organization that operates in the Outer Rim Territories.
- ☹: Though the Veiled Sorority attacks any prize of value, its pirates tend to prey on other criminal organizations as a matter of choice.
- ☹ ☹: The Veiled Sorority is ruled by a "Pirate Queen" who governs with absolute authority. She can be distinguished from her crews due to the fact that she always wears a mask.
- ☹: While the Sorority targets many criminal organizations, it has recently been singling out ships of the Zann Consortium.

THE MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN

The mask that the Veiled Sorority's Pirate Queen wears appears to be little more than an ornate platinum covering. It actually contains several technological systems that aid the Queen in maintaining her anonymity. A holographic projector allows the mask's wearer to adjust her physical appearance, and a voice modulator adjusts her speech to match that of the first Queen.

This modification allows the wearer to upgrade all Deception skill checks made to disguise herself once. The mask is also equipped with an enhanced optics suite, which is identical to the armor attachment described on page 194 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.



THE ZANN CONSORTIUM

The Zann Consortium was formed by Tyber Zann, a onetime protégé of Jabba Desilijic Tiure, who was imprisoned in the spice mines of Kessel following his betrayal of the Hutt crime lord. Since his escape, Zann has used all his business acumen and criminal knowledge to build a formidable underworld empire.

The Consortium is structured as a military organization with a veneer of corporate culture. Though not nearly as powerful as a true military operation, it is still a force to be reckoned with on the ground as well as in space. Other criminal interests in the Outer Rim, notably Black Sun, have taken notice of the Consortium and its growing base of power.

Black Sun agents have made overtures to the Zann Consortium on several occasions. Quietly, however, they have also been working against the Consortium's interests in an attempt to subvert what they see as its inevitable growth. Tyber Zann knows this, and he has been doing his best to keep Black Sun at arm's length—at least for the time being.

Player Characters who attempt an **Average (◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld) check** can reveal the following information about the Zann Consortium:

- ✨: The Consortium is an up-and-coming criminal organization operating in the Outer Rim.
- 🏴‍☠️: The Zann Consortium is ruthless in its pursuit of profits, and no crime seems to be too immoral as long as it garners money and power.
- 🏴‍☠️ 🏴‍☠️: The Consortium was formed by a ruthless criminal mastermind named Tyber Zann, following his escape from the spice mines of Kessel.
- 🤝: Though the Zann Consortium is tolerated by other syndicates, such as Black Sun, there are whispers that the two are preparing to either ally with one another—or go to war.

OPERATIONS

The Zann Consortium's operations consist of all manner of illegal and quasi-legal enterprises. If there is money to be made from ruthlessness, the Consortium inevitably finds a way to rake in the profits from it. This willingness to dabble in nearly any kind of immoral behavior has caused its employees to step on the toes of just about every other criminal organization in the Outer Rim.

One of the Consortium's most profitable endeavors to date has been to feed upon the current conflict between the Rebel Alliance and the Galactic Empire. Tyber Zann is none too fond of either organization, so he chooses to prey on both of them simultaneously. This has made the Consortium few Rebel or Imperial friends, but both sides are currently too occupied with each other to focus their attention on a seemingly insignificant criminal endeavor.

The Zann Consortium operates primarily in the Outer Rim, thriving in the relative lawlessness of the region. Though it has begun expanding operations toward the Core Worlds, perhaps in hopes of courting the centrally located Crymorah syndicate, it continues to claim holdings on many Outer Rim worlds, including Ryloth, Hypori, and Saleucami. Zann has built opulent palaces on many of the Consortium's most profitable planets in order to demonstrate his organization's growing power.

Zann often approaches worlds with a significant Consortium presence to offer military protection from both the Rebel Alliance and the Empire. Such extortion attempts are generally seen for what they are, but many planetary governments, lacking the military strength to fend off even the Consortium, can do little to resist. Those worlds that decline these offers suffer from acts of domestic terrorism, as well as Consortium-sown corruption within their own government.



IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The following list introduces Non-Player Characters with large roles to play in the adventure and refers the GM to their full entries elsewhere in the book.

- **Venlana Sipal:** An ambitious Pantoran working for Tyber Zann and the PCs' primary contact for the bounty posting. She is secretly a mole for the Veiled Sorority and she has designs on the Queen's Mask (see page 17).
- **Porel:** Venlana's male Twi'lek accomplice, who has been sent by Tyber Zann to spy on her and determine if she is a traitor (see page 93).
- **The Pirate Queen:** A title more than a specific person, this identity shifts over the course of the adventure. An Ubese named **Noira** is the true Queen (see page 91), but the human **Revah** serves as her decoy on Saleucami (page 36). By the end of the adventure, **Venlana** or even one of the Player Characters could take up the mantle of the Queen.
- **Ryale Wei:** As Noira's second-in-command, this human oversees her secret palace beneath Worlport. If the PCs spare her life, she may prove to be a useful ally (see page 71).
- **Jander:** A male Toydarian living on Ord Mantell who serves as the PCs' Consortium contact and source of leads in **Episode II** (see page 49).
- **Illo Vandin:** A Herglic crime boss on Ord Mantell and notorious gambler. He has valuable information on the Pirate Queen, but shares it only if the PCs do his dirty work first (see page 52).
- **Jerid Sykes:** The Zann Consortium fleet commander aboard the cruiser *End of Days*, his flagship. A skilled ex-Imperial officer, he arrives to defend the smuggling convoy from the Sorority at the adventure's climax (see page 79).

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

What begins as a simple dead-or-alive bounty soon becomes more complicated: anyone can claim a bounty on a person, but how does a hunter claim a bounty on an idea? The adventure assumes the PCs pursue the Pirate Queen as described by the main plotline, but events may play out differently, depending on the PCs' actions and choices, as well as on any complications or subplots the GM chooses to include. By the climax, the PCs may have proven themselves to Tyber Zann, joined up with the Veiled Sorority, or assumed the identity of the Pirate Queen themselves.

RUNNING MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN WITH AGE OF REBELLION AND FORCE AND DESTINY

This adventure can also be used for types of PCs beyond those found in **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE**, such as agents of the Rebel Alliance or nascent Force sensitives. The Sorority could have also targeted Alliance transports, or an undercover Alliance operative might have learned the Consortium plans to deal with the pirates. The PCs might even encounter this agent at the end of the adventure, making for future campaign paths. PCs looking to expand their knowledge of the Force might be drawn into this plot through rumors that the Sorority has uncovered ancient Jedi artifacts or is dealing in kyber crystals. The clash between the Sorority and the Consortium can draw in PCs with a wide range of backgrounds and Motivations. GMs should not hesitate to alter any plot details that follow as needed to use this book to draw a variety of these PCs into the hunt for the Pirate Queen.

EPISODE I: SEARCH ON SALEUCAMI

The adventure begins when the Player Characters decide to pursue the bounty notice for the Pirate Queen. The secure comm channel leads them to discuss the job in person on Saleucami, where the Veiled Sorority is staging the bulk of its attacks on the Zann Consortium. They meet with Venlana Sipal, one of Tyber Zann's underbosses, and discuss the details of the contract. She gives PCs leads to pursue as they hunt for the Queen. These ultimately direct the PCs to the Sorority's supposed base of operations in Blackwind Crater, known as "the Vault."

The Player Characters plan and launch their raid, running into a few surprises along the way. The Vault is an impressive installation, filled with Sorority pirates and guards. Once the PCs reach the Pirate Queen, they have to decide whether to deliver their target dead or alive. The Queen is not eliminated so easily, however, as the PCs soon find out.

EPISODE II: GOING TO GROUND

The second episode begins as the PCs realize they have captured (or killed) the wrong person. The true Queen has struck again, but the Consortium was able to trace the origin of a gloating transmission to Ord Mantell, the PCs' next destination. There, Venlana's contact Jander advises them to begin their investigation through Illo Vandin, a Herglic casino mogul and local crime boss in Worlport, the planet's capital.



In order to get a vital key to uncovering the Queen's underground palace from Vandin, they must accomplish one of two tasks for him. When the PCs complete either task, Vandin fulfills his end of the bargain. He reveals that the Queen's consort is in Worlport, and provides evidence to convince the man that she is playing him for a fool.

Once convinced, her consort reveals the location of the Queen's underground palace. Inside, the PCs barge in on a party hosted by Ryale Wei, the true Queen's second-in-command. If Wei is defeated, the PCs can discover the secret of the Pirate Queen in addition to the location of the fleet's flagship, the *Renegade's Blood*. They soon rendezvous with the bulk of the Consortium's fleet in space to begin their final attack.

EPISODE III: PREPARE FOR BOARDERS

With the trickery of the Queen revealed, the nature of the bounty changes: the PCs must capture her alive or otherwise ensure that she never returns. They engage the Sorority's ships as they hunt for the *Renegade's Blood*. Strategically disabling its defense and communication systems in combat greatly helps their attempt to board the ship and capture the Queen.

Once aboard, the PCs brave their way through a failing starship. Finally, they come face to face with Noira, the true Pirate Queen, who has a surprising offer for the PCs: join her pirate company and share in its riches. Once again, their actions decide the course of the adventure. In extended campaigns, their choice will have far-reaching repercussions even after the conclusion of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**.

GAME PREPARATION

The GM should consider modifying the adventure and adding subplots that directly pertain to the PCs' backgrounds and players' play styles. A combat-oriented party benefits from additional combat encounters; the GM could make more use of the **Creatures & Challenges** from Saleucami and Ord Mantell (see pages 15 and 43) and even include rival bounty hunters who are pursuing the same lucrative contract. A socially inclined party is more likely to be interested in the motivations and machinations of the Pirate Queen. Such a group should be offered the opportunity to join her side sooner if members spend significant time negotiating with Ryale, Noira, or Ven-lana. The GM could even reverse the space combat in **Episode III** and have the PCs fighting alongside the *Renegade's Blood* against Jerid Sykes and the *End of Days*. The more the GM personalizes **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN** to the players' tastes, the more successful the adventure is likely to be.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

Guidelines for awarding experience points for the main encounters and completed subplots appear at the end of each episode. The GM should also consider granting XP during or after sessions in which the PCs complete any of the objectives for the current episode. After each session, the GM also should grant whatever baseline experience reward deemed appropriate (typically 15 XP per PC per session). Waiting until the end of each episode to award dozens of experience points is likely to frustrate **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** players, because the game's advancement system is intended to promote incremental growth.

NEW OR REPLACEMENT CHARACTERS

As the adventure progresses, it may be necessary to introduce new PCs, due to the death of a PC or the addition of a new player to the group. The exact method of introduction and type of character that might logically be available depends on the PCs' current circumstances. Some suggestions include:

- The PCs might pick up local guides, ex-pirates, or other characters in the capital city of Taleucema while on Saleucami. With some help from the GM, a player could even adopt the role of one of the mercenary clone troopers in Blackwind Crater.
- All manner of characters make their home on Ord Mantell, allowing for great flexibility in PC background, species, and career. The new character could be employed by Jander or Illo Vandin, and sent to help the PCs with their tasks.
- The group could find sympathetic characters from the Zann Consortium fleet looking for a more independent lifestyle. The PCs might also find opportunists looking to literally jump ship when they see the Queen's flagship falter in **Episode III**.





SEARCH ON SALEUCAMI

*"I want her head on a pike,
and her mask nailed to my wall!"*

—Tyber Zann, upon hearing of the loss of the Censure

In **Episode I** of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, a representative of the Zann Consortium contacts the Player Characters regarding its exorbitant bounty on the head of the Veiled Sorority's leader. The PCs proceed to the planet of Saleucami, where they receive a full briefing and leads for locating the Queen's base. Following their investigations, the PCs find the hidden pirate base and raid it in an attempt to capture or kill the Queen. Unfortunately, little is as it seems—but is it ever? This chapter includes:

- **Saleucami:** Information and background on this world, along with some of the more interesting and dangerous creatures the Player Characters might face there.
- **Wanted...Disintegrations Optional:** A representative of the Zann Consortium wishes to offer the Player Characters an opportunity to collect on a very lucrative bounty.

- **The Exile, the Fence, and the Slicer:** The Player Characters investigate the leads provided to them by the Zann Consortium, and eventually learn the location of the Veiled Sorority's base on Saleucami.
- **Blackwind Crater:** A description of Blackwind Crater, where the Sorority's base is located.
- **Raiding the Vault:** The PCs infiltrate the Sorority's base in search of the Pirate Queen.
- **Dead or Alive:** The PCs return to their Consortium contact with the mark, only to learn later that celebrations were a bit premature.

The adventure may begin anywhere, as long as the PCs have access to a secure comm system. The Player Characters might even be on the planet of Saleucami already—picking up or dropping off smuggled goods, hiding from their enemies, or simply enjoying some much-needed rest and relaxation.

SALEUCAMI

Astronavigation Data: Salecami system, Suolriep sector, Outer Rim Territories

Orbital Metrics: 392 days per year / 26 standard hours per day

Government: corporate

Population: 1.4 billion (Pantoran 36%, Weequay 8%, Gran 8%, Human 6%, Twi'lek 4%, Other 38%)

Languages: Basic, Pantoran

Terrain: Caverns, craters, deserts, forests, jungles, mountains, volcanoes, wetlands

Major Cities: Taleucema (capital and the main starport)

Areas of Interest: Magma caverns

Major Exports: Botanicals, finished goods, medicines, technology

Major Imports: Foodstuffs, raw materials

Trade Routes: Talcene Transit (connects to the Perlemian Trade Route)

Special Conditions: Frequent meteor showers

Background: The word "saleucami" means "oasis" in Pantoran. For the world's first Pantoran settlers, the name was apt, as it is the only hospitable world in its planetary system. In time, Gran, Twi'lek, and Weequay colonists also immigrated here. They settled inside the world's numerous impact craters. The geothermal vents and subterranean water within made these craters unusually lush compared to the rest of the surface, resulting in a world of mixed terrain ranging from wetlands to deserts.

Outside of the oppressive heat of the equatorial regions, Saleucami's climate is quite mild most of the year. The temperature rises dramatically during the summer months, however, and remaining indoors is the only remedy. Because of this, most pursue their usual schedules at night during the period known as the Eventide.

The Pantoran colonists originally established the Eventide as a holiday of sorts. Lasting a little over three standard months, it is marked by long, lazy days and active nights. Schedules are reversed, with the midday meal traditionally served at midnight.

Saleucami is currently under Imperial control. The Imperial Governor is on the Zann Consortium's payroll, though, which guarantees that business is rarely disrupted.

The Imperial presence is felt noticeably only in Taleucema and some of the larger settlements on Saleucami. This mostly consists of attempts to crack down on Rebel sympathizers.

CRATER OASES

The many craters across Saleucami were created by meteorite impacts long ago. Major impacts are rare now, as planetary defenses destroy or redirect sizeable meteoroids.

Long ago, powerful impacts formed huge craters, uncovering geothermal vents, hot springs, and fertile soil. These features, in addition to a constant influx of volcanic ash, gave rise to lush oases within the craters, which became successful communities.

The largest impact crater contains the planetary capital of Taleucema. Originally established by Pantorans, it is now a cosmopolitan settlement with a full-service starport. Nearly anything can be bought or sold in the capital, including less-than-legal commodities.

Given the many fertile crater basins across the surface, it's rare for settlements to spring up in the arid wastes. Nevertheless, a number of villages and towns have taken root in these inhospitable regions.

AN OASIS WORLD

Pantoran immigrants colonized Saleucami over six thousand years ago. Members of other species eventually heard of the opportunities available on Saleucami and joined the original colonists. As the population grew, so did the world's political clout and economic potential.

Saleucami became the Outer Rim's most successful trading hub prior to the Great Galactic War. The planet remained loyal to the Old Republic through the political turmoil of the period; several major Sith victories shook Saleucami's faith in the Republic, however, leading the planet to join in founding the Rift Alliance. These doubts were later assuaged, and Saleucami reaffirmed its loyalty to the Republic.

For generations, it remained a peaceful oasis in the Outer Rim, but this would not last forever. The Clone Wars were a trying time for its people, but they weathered the storm, and much of their economy and infrastructure was spared from devastation. Following the Separatist defeat during the Siege of Saleucami, the Republic established an interim government while it pacified Separatist remnants. The population welcomed the Republic's clone troopers as saviors, and it appeared that peace had once again returned.

SALEUCAMI DURING THE CLONE WARS

During the Clone Wars, the people of Saleucami did their best to remove themselves from the galactic conflict as it tore the Republic apart. The planet had been peaceful for hundreds of years, and its settlers and residents preferred that it remain that way. War, with its destruction and intrigues, was antithetical to the average Saleucamian's way of life. The planetary government attempted to maintain a low profile in hopes that the hostilities would pass Saleucami by.

Despite the care the natives took to remain uninvolved, the war did eventually reach them when Jedi Master Eeth Koth was captured by General Grievous. Following Koth's rescue and the destruction of Grievous's ship in orbit above the planet, Grievous and the remnants of his droid army crashed in the forested plains of Saleucami. Though the Separatists were not on the planet's surface for very long, the incident reminded them of its presence and potential value. The Separatists eventually returned to Saleucami, using it as a staging area during the Outer Rim sieges.

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

The Pantoran colonists who initially settled Saleucami brought their cultural heritage with them. As a result, Saleucami's culture is based on freedom of expression, the pursuit of happiness, and a hunger for exploration. As additional species brought their own cultural values to the planet, the disparate beliefs and traditions began to intermingle.

Though Saleucami's unique traditions are based on Pantoran culture, they have definite Gran and Twi'lek influences. Weequay also make up a full eight percent of Saleucami's population, but they tend to be insular and refuse to allow other cultural to influence their own. As such, Weequay neighborhoods and settlements are self-contained. Despite this apparent xenophobia, Saleucami's Weequay hardworking colonists are just as willing as others help their non-Weequay neighbors in times of need.

Freedom is one of the most valued concepts to Saleucami's citizens, who chafed heavily under the rule of the Separatists during the Clone Wars. Though their desire for independence made the planet ripe for rebellion, the influence of the peaceful Gran society and the Twi'lek resilience of spirit meant that the people of Saleucami would persevere until the Republic freed them from their Separatist masters.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Saleucami is a vast world that offers a great deal of variety insofar as climate and terrain are concerned. The presence of so many verdant craters across the planet's surface has caused a number of unique ecosystems to spring up. Amid the vast tracts of woodland and arid deserts are sultry swamps and thick jungles, fierce predators and stubborn settlements.

BLACKWIND CRATER

Blackwind Crater is one of many isolated craters hosting a wide variety of life. Formed millennia ago by a series of devastating meteorite impacts, the resulting crater is deep, with treacherous walls that prevent all but avian species from escaping its stifling interior. Though the initial settlers ignored Blackwind Crater, Republic scientists later built a small research station at its northern end to study the branching evolutionary patterns of the crater's animals.

The Republic's research station operated for nearly a decade before it was abandoned, and Blackwind Crater faded from notice again due to its inaccessibility. The fact that a large pride of vicious thaelos also

inhabited its depths did little to attract potential residents. This changed when the Separatists took control of Saleucami during the Clone Wars. They established a comm station in the ruins of the old research facility, fortifying it with weaponry and defenses.

When the Republic troops defeated the Separatist forces holding Saleucami, they also destroyed the comm station in Blackwind Crater. Once again, the crater's microcosm was ignored, though rumors of pirates, smugglers, or even Rebels in the station's remains have cropped up from time to time.

TALEUCEMA

Taleucema, the capital of Saleucami, was the first colony established on the planetary surface by Pantoran settlers. The word "taleucema" is Pantoran in origin and translates as "verdant" or "rich." Indeed, the crater where Taleucema was built was once broad, green, and filled with all manner of life.

Saleucami's largest starport was established here prior to the Great Galactic War, and it has grown to account for nearly one-fifth of the city's surface area. Offworld trade is an important element of the economy; the city is known for its production and export of pharmaceuticals, medical products, and technology.

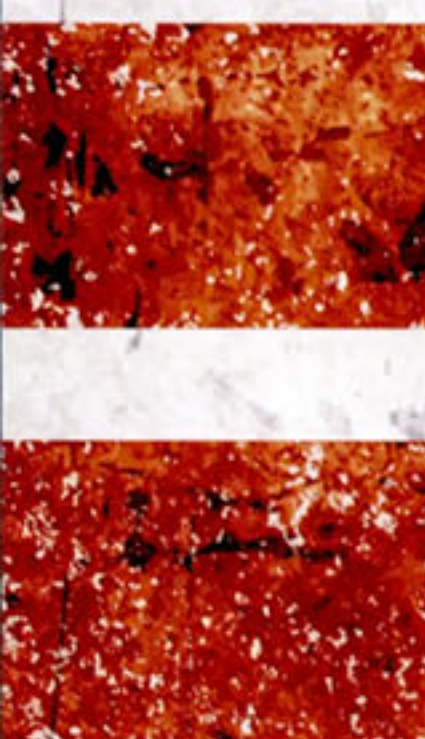
BUBSE SPICE

Like many other natural medicines, bubse root extract has illicit uses. One such chemical, known as bubse spice, is a concentrated anesthetic. Though dangerous if taken in large quantities, it is a common addition to many Outer Rim medpacs. Those under the influence of bubse spice become numb, both physically and emotionally. They feel little to no pain when wounded and behave without thought, conscience, or compassion.

A character affected by one or more doses of bubse spice increases his Wound Threshold by 4 until the end of the encounter. However, he also adds +20 to any Critical Injury result he suffers before the end of the encounter.

Bubse spice is a restricted substance (rarity 6) that costs 200 credits per dose. A 100-dose cargo container of bubse spice averages 17,500 credits.

The bubse tree, a bulbous plant common across the surface, is well known for its root's miraculous medicinal properties. Taleucema features the only planet-side mass production of bubse tree extracts and medicines, and not surprisingly bubse root extracts are the city's principal export.



CREATURES AND CHALLENGES

Saleucami owes much of its ecological diversity to its isolating, fertile craters and is home to a number of indigenous species. Galva herds wander the planet's equatorial regions, seemingly oblivious to the heat, while packs of thaelos hunt prey from the treetops.

GALVA [MINION]

Galva are a diminutive and innocuous mammalian species native to Saleucami. They travel in large herds of up to one hundred individuals, feeding off of desert lichens and moss as they migrate across the planet's oppressively hot equatorial regions. Galva rarely drink water in any significant quantity, as they get all the moisture they need from the food they consume.

Galva are often hunted for their skins, which can be tanned into a supple leather that has grown increasingly popular (an undamaged hide goes for 1,000 credits, rarity 6). As a result, many of the largest galva herds have been depleted by overhunting.

2

BRAWN

2

AGILITY

1

INTELLECT

1

CUNNING

1

WILLPOWER

1

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

2

W. THRESHOLD

3

M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills (group only): Athletics, Perception, Survival.
Talents: None.
Abilities: None.
Equipment: Teeth (Brawl; Damage 2; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]).

NUUNO [NEMESIS]

One of the most dangerous of Saleucami's native species is the nuuno, a massive, omnivorous crustacean named after the Pantoran word for "stone." When at rest, nuunos appear to be little more than large, eroded boulders. However, they can react to prey in an instant, lashing out with their whiplike antennae and claws that can snap durasteel bars.

Practically immune to personal weapons, nuunos can be a destructive force of nature if allowed to enter settlements. Tales tell of entire villages and crater towns being decimated by a single nuuno. Fortunately, the creatures are solitary and rarely work together, though sibling pairs are occasionally encountered in Saleucami's deeper wastes.

6

BRAWN

2

AGILITY

1

INTELLECT

2

CUNNING

4

WILLPOWER

2

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

10

W. THRESHOLD

40

S. THRESHOLD

14

M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills: Brawl 4, Discipline 3, Perception 3, Resilience 5, Survival 3, Vigilance 3.
Talents: None.
Abilities: Silhouette 3.
Equipment: Antennae (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Ensnare 3, Sunder), claws (Brawl; Damage 8; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Breach 2, Vicious 3).

THAELO [RIVAL]

Thaelos are simian predators that dwell in the jungle trees common to Saleucami's many craters. They are excellent climbers, moving with a speed and grace that belie their bulk, especially when hunting prey. To make matters worse, they hunt in family groups, or prides, and have been known to bring even the largest creatures down with both swiftness and ease.

Though thaelos can move on two legs, they are much swifter when using their long arms for support. The greenish-brown fur that covers their bodies provides camouflage in the treetops, and their large red eyes easily penetrate Saleucami's near-constant gloom. They attack their prey with their powerful limbs, but wild tales of thaelos using rudimentary melee weapons such as clubs are not unknown.

5

BRAWN

4

AGILITY

1

INTELLECT

3

CUNNING

2

WILLPOWER

1

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

6

W. THRESHOLD

14

M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Coordination 3, Perception 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3.
Talents: Lethal Blows 1 (adds +10 to any Critical Injury results inflicted on opponents).
Abilities: Excellent Climber (once per game session, the character may reroll any one Athletics check made when climbing).
Equipment: Fists (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]).

WANTED...

DISINTEGRATIONS OPTIONAL

At the start of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the Player Characters can be almost anywhere, as long as they have access to a secure comm channel. It is more convenient if they are already on Saleucami, but this isn't strictly necessary. In either case, they soon notice an advertisement, or receive an incoming transmission from Venlana, a female Pantoran in the employ of the Zann Consortium.

Player Characters who are bounty hunters in one of the galaxy's many hunters' guilds may learn of the job from their guild leadership. Guilds expect a 10% to 20% cut of the bounty in return for the marketing, negotiation, and support they provide their sponsored hunters. Alternatively, bounty hunter PCs with access to bounty boards could be contacted directly by the Zann Consortium or could find an open ad on their bounty board of choice. The ad is vague, reading something like the following:

"Hunter of masked prey required. Lucrative contract for individuals and groups of sufficient skill and reputation. IPKC optional. Provide contact information and qualifications to HN4-768A via secure comm."

All bounty hunter characters are assumed to have a valid Imperial Peace-Keeping Certificate (IPKC), and would recognize that "IPKC optional" indicates a bounty that is personal or extrajudicial. If the Zann Consortium is not seeking out the PCs specifically, other groups of hunters are also working on the same contract. Such circumstances might prove problematic for the PCs over the course of the adventure, and could provide the GM with multiple opportunities to incorporate PCs' backgrounds and Obligations. It is possible the PCs have previous ties to the Zann Consortium (for good or ill), are already dealing in bubse spice smuggling, or simply require something from the Consortium—but first, the Consortium requires something from them.

When the contact takes place, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Your viewscreen flashes, revealing a poised Pantoran woman with blue skin and dark hair. Her voice is melodic, and she speaks with confidence and authority.

"Greetings. My name is Venlana, and I am contacting you on behalf of the Zann Consortium. We are experiencing shipping losses that exceed our projections. These challenges to our bottom line are due to pirates—rather, one pirate in particular—and we would like to contract you as part of our program of loss prevention. Should you be interested, please meet with me on the planet of Saleucami, in the city of Taleucema."

Venlana smiles, her white teeth highlighted by her blue skin, and waits for your reply.

At this point, the PCs likely have questions. Venlana attempts to answer them, but she politely insists that she can only disclose the full details in person. She is also resistant to off-topic banter, and always steers the conversation back to the contract. As a symbol of good intent, she has been authorized to offer them an advance of 500 credits each if they agree to meet with her. Should they accept the contract, the 500 credits per PC is deducted from their final compensation.

If pressed by the PCs for answers Venlana is not inclined to give, she ends the conversation. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Venlana's composure seems strained for a moment, and you notice a predatory glint in her eyes that wasn't there before.

"I guarantee this contract is quite lucrative," she says. "The Zann Consortium is never stingy when it comes to protecting its interests. Unfortunately, my time is rather precious, so I must see to other tasks. I hope you consider this offer, as well as its rewards, and meet with me on Saleucami."

The transmission ends, leaving you to contemplate your next move.

Ultimately, it is up to the PCs to follow up on Venlana's communication. If they agree to meet, she tells them that she plans to contact them again once they've landed on Saleucami. Once they are on the planet (or if they are there already), she arranges to meet them at the Paradise, a cantina close to the starport (continue to **Paradise Found**, on page 18).

Should the PCs become distracted or decide not to follow up with Venlana, she contacts them eventually and raises the initial payment to 1,000 credits per PC. This is as far as she bends, however, and they must either take the bait or find something else to do.

VENLANA SIPAL, CONSORTIUM UNDERBOSS [NEMESIS]

Venlana Sipal is a Saleucamian native descended from the original Pantoran colonists. She wears a mask of polite professionalism at all times, but her true nature is much more sinister. Ambitious and merciless, she does anything to ensure her own advancement. Her skin is blue and her hair a dark shade of blue-black. She generally dresses in conservative suits.

2	3	3	4	3	4
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
2	12	13	0	0	

Skills: Charm 3, Coercion 3, Deception 3, Knowledge (Underworld) 2, Melee 2, Negotiation 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Streetwise 3.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice), Point Blank 2 (add +2 damage to one hit of a successful Ranged [Heavy] or Ranged [Light] attack made at short or engaged range).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Holdout blaster (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), conservative clothing, stimpack.



DESCENT INTO TALEUCEMA

Assuming the PCs aren't already on the planet of Saleucami, they need to travel there. Unless the GM has something else planned for them, the trip is uneventful, and the PCs are able to land at the Taleucema spaceport without incident.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the Player Characters' vessel comes in for a landing:

As you break through the heavy clouds of Saleucami, you are presented with an awesome sight. A large city, its lights shining brightly in the gloom, spreads out between the walls of a crater many kilometers wide. To the north, ships land and take off in smooth patterns, disappearing through the clouds or taxiing to one of the many available docking bays at the bustling spaceport below.

Taleucema is a large city built within a massive crater measuring nearly sixteen kilometers across at its widest point. The spaceport, which dominates the northeastern sector of the city, is constantly abuzz with vessels landing, taking off, and loading or unloading cargo. The areas surrounding the docking bays are brightly lit, in order to counter Saleucami's dim natural lighting.

Docking fees are a modest 75 credits per day, and docking bay security is tight. Security droids, as well as guards, patrol at regular intervals to ensure that ships within the bays aren't maltreated by scofflaws, thieves, or ship-jackers.

Once the PCs' vessel has landed, their ship's communications console chimes, announcing a call. Upon answering, the PCs are greeted by Venlana's familiar features. Read or paraphrase the following:

Venlana smiles pleasantly. "Welcome to Saleucami. I look forward to meeting you all and have arranged for a private conference room at the Paradise, a cantina on the edge of the spaceport. Once you arrive, preferably within the hour, I will ensure you are properly refreshed before we get down to business."

Once more, Venlana refuses to discuss the contract, saying that there is plenty of time to discuss business once the PCs arrive at the Paradise. Should the PCs have any basic questions about Saleucami or the city of Taleucema, Venlana is happy to entertain a handful of questions before politely excusing herself.

At this point, the PCs can make final preparations before venturing into the city.

PARADISE FOUND

The part of the city bordering the starport, known colloquially as “the Traders’ Belt” (or, more simply, “the Belt”) is a mix of cantinas, gambling dens, overpriced shops, massage parlors, and other forms of entertainment designed to please space hands, merchants, and anyone else looking for a little rest and relaxation.

Unless the PCs have their own ground transportation or attempt to rent a speeder in the spaceport, they must make the trip to the Paradise on foot. During daylight hours, both pedestrians and landspeeders crowd the streets. After dark, the atmosphere is more sinister: most pedestrians are grim-faced thugs wandering the streets aimlessly or standing on street corners with menace in their eyes. PCs traveling by foot at night risk attracting the attention of a Weequay gang, unless they appear well armed or particularly competent (see **The Gangs of Taleucema** sidebar on page 20 for more information).

The Paradise cantina is inside the Belt, and is well known by anyone familiar with the city. From the outside, it appears to be just another cantina. A large Aqualish bouncer in a dark green suit stands near the entrance, observing anyone who enters, leaves, or walks by. He doesn’t give the PCs any trouble, but he does stare at them intently as they enter through the cantina’s bubse wood doors.

When the PCs enter the Paradise, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The interior of the cantina is dim and smells of smoke and distilled drinks. Though the Paradise is furnished like any other cantina in any other Outer Rim starport, there is a subtle buzz of business in the air. The patrons seem to concentrate more on their hushed conversations than their drinks.

As you stand in the entryway, your eyes adjusting from Saleucami’s gloom to the cantina’s, a male Twi’lek in a crisp brown suit approaches you. “You have come to see Venlana,” he states. “I will take you to her.” The Twi’lek turns on his heel and walks slowly toward the rear of the cantina.

The Twi’lek’s name is Porel, and he acts as Venlana’s personal assistant and bodyguard (see page 93 for his profile). He stays quiet if the PCs attempt to speak to him, and he raises his finger to his lips to silence them. Should they refuse or hesitate to follow him, he stops near a featureless metal door at the cantina’s rear wall and turns to face them, an expectant look on his face. As the PCs approach him there, Porel opens the metal door and stands aside to let them pass.

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs go through the metal door:

The room beyond the metal door is lit by a series of carved crystal globes hanging from the ceiling. A large conference table dominates the center of the room, surrounded by comfortable-looking chairs. To your left, a bar gleams with glasses and a wide array of bottles.

Venlana stands to greet you, a welcoming smile on her lips. “At last,” she says, inviting you with a gesture to refresh yourselves at the bar. “I thought this day would never come. Your reputations certainly precede you.”

You’re uncertain whether her comment about your reputation is a compliment or a veiled insult.

As the PCs see to their drinks, Porel enters the room and closes the door behind him. He stands next to the portal, his hands behind his back, and stoically observes every move they make. If anyone asks Venlana about him, she introduces him as her assistant.

Before the conversation can begin in earnest, Venlana cordially makes good on her offer to pay the PCs a small retainer for merely showing up. Even if she did not make the offer during her initial communication, she still provides each PC with an advance of 500 credits, either in cash or in the form of a credit chip.

Once the pleasantries are out of the way, Venlana explains the contract in greater detail. Read or paraphrase the following:

“While some losses in transit are expected and accounted for, the Zann Consortium’s shipments have been unusually beset by pirates of late. After some investigation, we have uncovered the identity of these criminals—a band of brigands referred to as the ‘Veiled Sorority.’ Despite the name, it does not discriminate by gender, or even species. However, only females are permitted to assume positions of leadership within the organization.

"We are interested in bringing this band of pirates to its knees. To do this, we are issuing a bounty for its leader, referred to as the 'Queen.' Beyond her title, we have been unable to procure any concrete data on her identity, location, or background. Should you agree to take the contract, it will be your responsibility to bring her to our justice, dead or alive, with proof that it is indeed the Queen that you deliver."

Venlana prefers to know immediately whether the PCs plan to take the contract. They may ask questions if they like, and Venlana answers them in a businesslike tone. She begins to grow impatient if the PCs continue to dither, at which time she presses them for a commitment.

Examples of some questions the PCs might ask, and the answers for each, include:

- **How much does this contract pay?** *"The Zann Consortium is prepared to offer each member of your crew 10,000 credits for successfully completing the contract...minus the retainer that has already been paid, of course. Should your performance be exceptional, a variety of bonuses may also be applied to your final compensation."*
- **How long has this been going on?** *"The first attack occurred nearly a month ago, but we assumed it was an isolated, random event. Since then, there have been three more attacks—one per week. We expect a fifth attack soon, and prefer that this contract be completed in short order."*
- **What have the pirates taken?** *"As you may or may not know, the Zann Consortium traffics at times in commodities that most authorities choose to restrict. We have been unable to determine a specific link between the contents of the stolen shipments...aside from their valuable nature, of course."*
- **Don't you keep shipments and routes secret?** *"Of course, which is another problem entirely. We believe that someone on the inside is providing the Sorority with data about our shipments. While embarrassing, this is not unexpected. Once we find the offender or offenders, they will regret betraying the trust of the Zann Consortium."*

This last answer is not offered unless a PC asks the proper question, though the GM may allude to the Consortium's suspicion of a mole in their organization, and thereby cause the PCs to broach the topic. This is a sensitive subject, embarrassing to the Consortium, but it is an important piece of information for the PCs to have much later on, if or when they are required to deal with the Consortium's mysterious traitor.

Once the PCs are committed, Venlana provides them with the most promising leads she has. Each can be investigated separately; only two of them are entirely fruitful, while the third could even cause the PCs some trouble in the long run.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Venlana removes a small datapad from a pocket inside her jacket. She activates it, scanning its screen briefly before she begins.

"Your first lead is an individual named Graf Lind. He was one of the Sorority's brigands, until he lost favor with them six years ago. Though nearly killed by his former associates, he managed to escape. We have discovered his current whereabouts—a dwelling in a local slum. His information is surely outdated, but he may have valuable intel."

Venlana pauses to address questions before moving on. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

"The second lead is Krezo Wasanti. He is a fence who operates his business near the starport. He came to our attention when he attempted to sell one of our agents some of our own goods, pillaged in one of the Sorority's recent raids. He must have some connection to the pirates, given he is obviously dealing in goods they have stolen."

As before, Venlana pauses to field any questions. Once ready, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

"The last lead isn't a person so much as a resource. Our slicers uncovered a data node called 'SororiNet.' Though ostensibly used to schedule tours of Saleucami's more rugged wastelands, the name alone is suspicious, and its security level is far too high for a mere tourism outfit. Should you have expertise in slicing, you might be able to learn more there."

With that, Venlana reminds the PCs that the Consortium is very eager to see this matter taken care of in a prompt and well-executed manner. She provides the PCs with a datapad loaded with all the information pertaining to the leads she mentioned, as well as with a comlink code through which she can be reached.

Assuming they have no additional questions, Venlana wishes the PCs luck and has Porel escort them out. They can remain in the Paradise and enjoy the local hospitality, but the prices are high, and the clientele is uninterested in providing further information.

THE EXILE, THE FENCE, AND THE SLICER

The leads that Venlana offered, as detailed on the datapad she provided to the PCs, are Graf Lind, a former human member of the Veiled Sorority; Krezo Wasanti, a local Rodian fence; and SororiNet, a mysterious data node.

GRAF LIND, THE EXILE

Graf Lind lives in a part of Taleucema known as “the Warren.” It is an overcrowded slum that clings to the eastern wall of the city’s crater like a cancer. The dwellings within consist of eroding stone and cracked ferrocrete tenements, with networks of tunnels and caves carved from the sandstone of the crater wall.

The Warren’s population includes many of the city’s poor, unwanted, and homeless; crime and casual violence are incredibly common at all hours of the day. A number of gangs claim much of the neighborhood as their own. Confrontations between the gangs are commonplace and deadly, and unaffiliated citizens sometimes get caught in the crossfire.

Graf’s residence is a single-room, prefab house that shows decades of wear. The exterior is scrawled with graffiti, and the alloy outer door is marked with a single black X that has been repainted several times. Any PC succeeding on an **Average (◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld)** or **Streetwise check** realizes that the X indicates that Graf is under a gang’s protection, though which gang is not immediately obvious.

PCs may want to observe Graf’s place before talking with him. He observes a simple routine, leaving around noon each day to run errands, and returning one or two hours later with food and bottles of rotgut.

THE GANGS OF TALEUCEMA

Depending on the Game Master’s plans, the PCs may be approached or harassed by the Warrens’ gangs. The largest two—the Yellow Thaelos and the Stoneskins—clash over control of the region but always have time for attacking others who venture into the Warrens. Many other gangs and petty criminal groups operate here as well, should the GM desire to use another or to include an organization the PCs have had dealings with in the past. Members of these gangs conform to the Street Tough profile, on page 396 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

GAINING ENTRY

Gaining access to Graf’s home is a straightforward affair. The easiest approach is to knock on the door and see whether the old pirate answers. The lock is also easily picked with an **Average (◆◆) Skulduggery check**. Alternatively, the door can be kicked in with a **Hard (◆◆◆) Athletics check**, though this is both conspicuous and loud. If it’s any time between noon and two in the afternoon, Graf is out running his daily errands.

Graf responds to knocking at his door with hostility, yelling behind the closed door for whoever it is to leave him alone from. If the knocking continues, he answers the door, his angry eyes bloodshot from drinking. The PCs may try to use a believable story in an attempt to get Graf to open his door. This requires a **Hard (◆◆◆) Charm, Coercion, or Deception check**, modified with ☐ if Graf has been drinking (which is a sure bet, unless he’s just returned from running errands).

When the Player Characters look into or enter Graf’s home, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The stink of sweat and the stinging odor of raw alcohol assault your senses, causing your eyes to water. The single room is small and strewn with trash, debris, and empty liquor bottles. The center of the floor is dominated by a single sweat-stained mattress, and the only light is cast by a dingy, flickering lamp.

Once the door is open, Graf loudly protests the intrusion. If the PCs attempt to use force against him at any point during the conversation, he draws a vibrorapier from inside his cane and attempts to run the offending PC through. If drunk or hung over, he suffers ☐ on any checks he attempts to make.





If the PCs keep things civil, any mention of the Sorority or Graf’s prior affiliation with it causes him to wake up. His eyes, typically dull, become focused and interested. He answers honestly, but with little information of worth. It’s been years since he was active, and he has no idea where its current base of operations on Saleucami is. That said, Graf can provide general information about the Veiled Sorority—nothing more detailed than what a simple success would have provided using the results listed on page 6—but he feigns ignorance as to its actual hierarchy, outside of the all-female nature of its officers.

Should Graf learn that the PCs are attempting to find and capture (or kill) the Queen, he immediately asks if he can help them do so. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

"Look, mates. I know I'm outta the loop these days, but I can help ya. I want to help ya, blast it! After what those cutthroats did to me..." Graf pauses and grimly rubs his prosthetic leg. "I been waitin' years for a chance to get back at that witch queen and her crew. It ain't about money—I don't want none. All I be wantin' is justice!"

Graf sets his jaw and looks at you, his eyes suddenly moistened with emotion.

Despite Graf's apparent sincerity, his ultimate goal is as far from revenge as can be. In truth, he's more interested in using the PCs to redeem himself and earn back his membership in the Veiled Sorority. If accepted into the PCs' ranks, he plays the loyal cohort and partner until he sees an opportunity to turn the PCs over to his erstwhile comrades.

Suspicious PCs may wish to make an **opposed Discipline versus Deception (♦ ♦ ♦) check** to judge his sincerity. If he is drunk, the PCs gain  on their Discipline check. Success indicates that Graf isn't sincere, though the reasons behind his insincerity are unclear. Additional  further define his intentions, alluding to the fact that he somehow sees more than just vengeance.  allows additional insight into Graf's ambition, while  supplies doubt to any suspicions the PCs might have due to a successful check.

If the PCs leave without having invited Graf to join them, he attempts to pursue the PCs, stalking them and dogging their steps. If they notice and confront him, Graf sticks to his story. Unless he becomes incapacitated or is killed, he single-mindedly follows the PCs until they accept him as an ally or attempt to take his life.

GRAF LIND, FORMER PIRATE [RIVAL]

Graf is a human male in his fifties, though his lifestyle has aged him prematurely. His hair is long, gray, and unkempt, and his blue eyes are dull—unless he's interested in something. His cheap prosthetic leg—all he could afford following the tender mercies of the Veiled Sorority—makes him walk with a noticeable limp, and often uses a polished bubse wood cane for support. The GM is free to further develop his background and the reasons for his ejection from the Sorority as desired to best match the style of play and personality used for him. Perhaps he was expelled for hesitation in combat, or embezzlement, or even unsanctioned killings.

Graf has largely given up on life, whether he admits it or not, and has decided to drink himself to death. Despite this, he fantasizes about returning to the Sorority someday, for he believes the best years of his life were spent there.

Despite his bad attitude, which is especially prominent when he's drunk (as he often is), Graf is actually a fairly charismatic fellow. His run-down appearance belies the fact that he was once a very dashing and handsome young man. When sober, he can be serious, competent, and above all things, cunning.



Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Charm 3, Deception 3, Knowledge (Underworld) 2, Melee 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Streetwise 3.

Talents: Natural Brawler (once per game session, the character may re-roll one Brawl or Melee check), Quick Draw (may draw or holster an easily accessible weapon as an incidental once per round).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Holdout blaster (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Stun setting), vibrapier (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 3, Vicious 1) concealed in cane, heavy clothing (+1 soak), prosthetic leg replacement.



OVER THE FENCE

Krezo Wasanti is a Rodian fence who operates an import/export business in the Belt, on the starport's edge. He deals with anyone—profit is profit—and he isn't shy about dealing in less-than-legal or hot merchandise. Unfortunately, greed often clouds his limited common sense, especially when dealing with stolen product.

This poor judgment led Krezo to sell three disruptor pistols to one of the Zann Consortium's agents. After acquiring the pistols, the agent easily determined that the disruptors were originally part of the cargo on one of the Consortium's lost ships. Krezo is blissfully unaware that the Consortium has uncovered his connection to the Veiled Sorority. If he did know, he would have left as quickly as possible, having gathered all the wealth he could and left Saleucami far, far behind.

KREZO'S IMPORTS

Krezo's shop is neat, organized, and well presented, and resides in a relatively sparse area with few surrounding buildings. Though serving as an importer is a legitimate cover for his illegitimate dealings, he takes pride in his reputation as an honest businessman who goes the extra kilometer for his clients, no questions asked. The interior of the shop is clean and features all manner of luxury goods, from bottles of exotic liquors to hermetically sealed boxes of premium cigarras. Standard business hours—from midmorning to dusk—are observed, though Krezo has been known to attend to shadier dealings after dark.

If the Player Characters arrive at Krezo's Imports during normal business hours, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

As you enter the import shop, you are greeted by a soft chime and a pleasant gust of environmentally conditioned air scented by exotic goods. The shop's shelves and counters are spotless, well organized, and stocked with a wide selection of luxury goods, trinkets, and unidentifiable knick-knacks from all over the galaxy.

A short, olive-skinned Rodian with red-gold eyes sitting behind a polished metal counter raises his gaze from a datapad and briefly sizes you up. His face suddenly lights up with a welcoming smile. "Greetings, my friends," he says in thickly-accented Basic. "What can Krezo do for you on this fine Saleucami day?"

As if on cue, an ASP-series labor droid stomps through a pair of double doors and into the showroom, its servos grinding. It stops and stands motionless, seemingly waiting for a command from its master.

Krezo isn't expecting trouble, and he assumes the PCs are just another group of customers looking to satisfy an exotic vice or shopping for a unique gift. If any of the PCs are conspicuously armed, he attempts to maintain a cool demeanor. In such a case, any PC succeeding on an **Average (◆ ◆) Perception** or **Streetwise check** notices that Krezo is made visibly nervous by the obvious firepower.

If it becomes clear that the PCs aren't interested in buying or selling, but are instead looking for leads relating to the Veiled Sorority, Krezo comes to the conclusion that he's in big trouble. Any mention of the Zann Consortium by the PCs only increases his level of desperation, and he does the only thing he can think to do in order to escape—he utters a code phrase ("Koochoo, bata kap da wanga!") and unleashes Koochoo, the droid, on the PCs.

Outside of its reinforced manipulators, Koochoo isn't designed for combat. Krezo assumes he has only a few seconds before the droid is out of commission, and he takes advantage of the opportunity by making a break for the nearest exit. Unless he is stopped or incapacitated, Krezo does his best to escape into the streets, seeking refuge wherever he can find it.

AN AFTER-HOURS VISIT

Instead of taking a direct approach, the Player Characters may decide to break into Krezo's shop after hours. Bypassing the lock on the front door requires either a **Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆) Skulduggery check** to pick the lock or an upgraded **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Athletics check** to force the door open. Forcing the door trips a silent alarm that alerts Krezo to a break-in, unless one of the PCs succeeds at a **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Computers check** to detect and circumvent the security system before they break the door.

If they visit after dark, the shop is gloomy and seemingly deserted when the PCs break in. As they enter the shop, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The import shop is dark and quiet, the air still and cool. The shelves lining the walls are stocked with luxury goods, trinkets, and unidentifiable knick-knacks from all over the galaxy. At the rear of the shop, a sliver of light can be seen coming from between a pair of alloy double doors behind an immaculate countertop.

KREZO'S BACK DOOR

Clever Player Characters may be interested in finding all methods of ingress and egress from Krezo's Imports. With a small amount of footwork, they discover a security door in a back alleyway. The door is made from heavy alloy and does not feature an external handle, keypad, or other mechanism for opening it from the outside.

Given its construction, the door is nearly impossible to physically break down. PCs succeed at an upgraded **Formidable** (◆◆◆◆◆) **Athletics** check in order to do so.

PCs who aren't worried about attracting attention might consider using weapons or explosives in order to breach the security door. In such a case, the door has a soak of 4 and a wound threshold of 15. However, explosions or blaster fire is reported by residents, and armed spaceport security appears within 5 minutes. Use the Spaceport Security Detail profile on page 398 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook if needed.

Regardless of what time of night the PCs break in, Krezo is in the shop's stockroom with a human client. Koochoo, Krezo's ASP-series labor droid, is standing motionless in the front showroom. If the PCs used physical force to break in, Krezo becomes aware of their presence and shoos his client out the shop's rear security door before deciding whether or not to make his escape. This depends, in large part, on how many assumed thieves are in the shop, how well armed they are, and whether or not Krezo can identify them as possible allies, associates, or enemies.

Should Krezo decide that discretion is the better part of valor, he unleashes Koochoo and makes a break for the nearest exit. This follows much the same pattern as the daylight encounter described above. If desired, he can activate a hidden alarm as he runs out that calls in local security forces (these can be portrayed using the Spaceport Security Detail from page 398 from the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook).

WHAT KREZO KNOWS

Krezo isn't stupid. Once the PCs have him in their custody, he implicitly understands that his life is in danger. He attempts to wear a brave mask, but in reality, he's terrified of what the future holds for him. Depending on the methods the PCs use in extracting information from Krezo, he either attempts to talk his way out of his predicament, or he breaks down entirely and spills his guts.

The PCs can question Krezo with an upgraded **opposed Hard** (◆◆◆) **Charm** or **Deception** check, or an upgraded **opposed Average** (◆◆) **Coercion** check. He responds best to applications or threats of force—any mention of the Zann Consortium, or any presentation of items usable as implements of torture, grants the PCs ☐ on these checks. This bonus is cumulative. If Krezo is threatened with death outright, the PCs gain an additional ☐ to any Coercion checks made to interrogate the Rodian.

Krezo explains that he knows very little about the Veiled Sorority, other than that it is a pirate band and that his dealings with its representatives have always been lucrative. His contact with the Sorority is a human female named Mandi, and she was the one who sold him the Consortium's disruptors. Though he isn't familiar with the Sorority's organization on Saleucami, he did hear Mandi mention a place—Blackwind Crater—to one of her associates, and he assumes that's where the pirates are holed up.

Beyond this small amount of information, Krezo is ignorant of anything else of import. If the PCs continue to press him, he begins to make things up in order to escape any immediate repercussions. If the PCs allow him to live, his first inclination is to leave Saleucami behind in order to escape the wrath of both the Sorority and the Zann Consortium. In fact, the PCs may eventually meet him again, depending on where their adventures take them.

RAIDING KREZO'S SHOP

Enterprising or larcenous PCs may wish to search Krezo's shop for money and valuables. Krezo has 3,500 credits stashed away in a hidden compartment behind the showroom's counter, but finding it necessitates a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Perception** check.

In addition to the cash, Krezo's shop is filled with all manner of trinkets and imported luxury goods. All of these items have value for someone, though many of the goods are esoteric enough that it may take time to locate someone willing to buy them. Should the PCs wish to satisfy their own vices by stealing liquor, cigarras, or small art objects, they can, but most of the items that they find are worth less than 50 credits.

The stockroom is where the more valuable commodities are kept. A number of crates marked with Consortium symbols are stacked in a corner and covered with a tarp. If the PCs return the crates to the Zann Consortium, Venlana happily rewards them with a bonus of 2,000 credits. Curious PCs who decide to examine the contents of the crates find a smattering of proscribed goods, such as spice, light weapons, and cybernetics (details are at the GM's discretion). In total, the goods shouldn't be worth more than 10,000 to 15,000 credits at standard pricing.

KREZO WASANTI, FENCE [RIVAL]

Krezo Wasanti is small, even for a Rodian. His more physically capable siblings and their friends bullied him for much of his youth. Despite his shortcomings, he was extremely bright, and was successful in every business endeavor he chose to pursue. Once Krezo had accumulated enough capital, he abandoned his homeworld in search of his next big opportunity.

His path took him to Saleucami, where his initial pursuits were entirely legal. Over time, however, he began to see how easily a businessman could profit by skirting the rules—and even more so by breaking them. Krezo's profits swelled as his moral compunctions shrank. He became increasingly complacent, greedy, and overconfident.

It is for precisely this reason that Krezo came to the attention of the Zann Consortium in its current battle with the Veiled Sorority. Seeing an opportunity to bring in another quick profit by selling stolen goods to an unknown client, and confident he would never be caught, Krezo broke his promise to hold the goods until the fallout from Sorority raid on the Consortium's ships had blown over. He made a sale that he should have considered more carefully.

Krezo can be charming, and he often feigns naiveté when dealing with new clients. He affects a strong Rodian accent and pretends his fluency in Basic is less than ideal. He's small in stature and weak of body, but he is highly intelligent and astute. Nevertheless, his avarice gets the better of him more often than not. He dresses in fine suits tailored to his physique, and keeps an ASP-series labor droid in his shop to do all the heavy lifting.

When dealing with Krezo, it is possible for anyone to play on his greed in order to gain an advantage. When appealing to his desire for money and profit, PCs gain to all Charm, Deception, and Negotiation checks made to influence Krezo.

1	2	4	3	2	3
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 1		W. THRESHOLD 11		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills: Charm 2, Deception 2, Knowledge (Underworld) 4, Mechanics 1, Negotiation 3, Ranged (Light) 1, Streetwise 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Light blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), fine clothes, import/export shop keycard, ASP-series labor droid.

KOOCHOO, ASP-SERIES LABOR DROID [MINION]

Koochoo (Hutttese for “idiot” or “moron”) is Krezo's labor droid. Krezo has had Koochoo's programming modified, making the droid completely loyal and incapable of intentionally causing harm to its master. This does not apply to others, and Krezo is happy to use Koochoo to keep enemies at bay while he escapes.

Like other ASP-series labor droids, Koochoo is only capable of speaking two words: “Affirmative” and “Negative,” both spoken in very mechanical Hutttese.

4	1	1	1	1	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 5		W. THRESHOLD 5		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills (group only): Brawl, Melee.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink and can survive in vacuum and underwater; immune to poisons and toxins).

Equipment: Reinforced manipulators (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3).



SLICE AND DICE

SororiNet is a secured computer network used by the Veiled Sorority to disseminate information, track shipments, and communicate internally. Several nodes are maintained, and there is generally one for every world where the Sorority maintains a significant presence. These individual nodes are part of a system that allows members with the proper access codes the ability to access Sorority computer resources throughout the Outer Rim. Each planet's SororiNet node consists of three nested subnodes.

The first and most obvious node is the "front"—an innocuous public node designed to act as a decoy. These front nodes are used as "masks" to hide the true purpose of other nodes nested within them. Most are easily accessible, especially if they are disguised as the nodes of legitimate businesses. Security on these is universally light, though sufficient to discourage casual access from unwanted parties.

The second node is hidden within the front node, often in plain sight. Anyone wishing to access it directly must either present a complex access code, or slice through the node's active and passive security systems. Within it are kept a number of low-security (though still sensitive) assets, such as Sorority communications, schedules, and other services.

The third and final node is protected not only by active software defenses, but also by a full-time slicer who monitors overall security. If necessary, the slicer can step in to serve as one of the node's active security elements, especially if passive and active security programs have been breached. Within the third node, only the most sensitive information and data is kept, and it is often encrypted with high-level ciphers. On Saleucami, activity on the SororiNet is actively monitored by Lathe, a talented Sorority slicer.

SALEUQUEST OVERLAND ADVENTURES

The Veiled Sorority's front node on Saleucami is disguised as a small business, SaleuQuest Overland Adventures, which offers tours of the planet's more remote regions. Costs for such expeditions are exorbitant, purely to discourage outside use. SaleuQuest often disguises shipments to its base at Blackwind Crater as chartered trips.

PCs wishing to charter an expedition are unable to speak to anyone immediately. If tenacious, they are able to leave messages, but these attempts are initially ignored. Persistent PCs eventually hear back from an operator, who tells them that charters are filled for the next three months. The operator—a legitimate employee who is unaffiliated with, and unaware of, the Sorority—adds the PCs' names to a waiting list, but she is unable to help them in any other way.

ACCESS DENIED

To slice into SororiNet, the first step is to locate the front. This can be done via a business search on Taleucema's public network using a **Simple (–) Computers check**. Terminals can be found in many locations, including public kiosks, inside most local offices and cantinas, and even within Krezo's establishment (see page 22).

Once the front is located, the slicer needs to access it. Though the node is public, it is encrypted and password-protected. An **Easy (◆) Computers check** breaks through the rudimentary security and allows the slicer to access the SaleuQuest front node.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The external security folds away, allowing you access to the SaleuQuest Overland Adventures business node. Though you see many options open to you—prompts to request a quote, schedule an expedition, or review the many distant locations that the company visits regularly—nothing appears to be out of the ordinary. You get the distinct impression that if there is a secondary node tied to this database, it must be hidden.

Though the link to the secondary node is hidden, a canny slicer can locate it easily enough using one of the following options:

- **Analyze the node's interface code:** The most direct route, this requires the slicer to succeed on an **Average (◆◆) Computers check**. Success reveals the precise location of the secondary node's access point, allowing the slicer to attempt to access it.
- **Manually selecting all options:** This is a time-consuming process, likely only used as a last resort by any slicer who fails to analyze the interface code. No check is required, but it takes an hour or two to locate the secondary node's access point.

The secondary node access point is disguised as a link to an accident indemnity form that connects to an empty file. The empty file, which also includes an apparently legitimate error message, is the gateway. Bypassing the security, which is much tougher than with previous gateways, requires a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check**.

PCs may search the secondary node for information on the pirates' base on Saleucami by attempting an **Average (◆◆) Computers check**. If successful, they are unable to locate anything resembling such coordinates, but they do locate a high-security gateway within the node.

SLICING 101

Whenever a PC attempts to slice a SororiNet node, that PC must attempt a **Computers check** with a difficulty depending on the level of security being bypassed. Use the following to determine the results of these attempts:

- ☆: The slicer gains immediate access to the SororiNet node. Additional successes decrease the time necessary to slice into the system.
- ☹: Every ☹ resulting from this check can be spent to give the slicer ■ to any other Computers checks attempted in this SororiNet node, but only for this access attempt. If the slicer is disconnected for any reason, the PC loses any ■ gained this way.
- ⚡: The PC gains immediate access to the secondary node and may upgrade the next Computers check made in that node once. The GM can provide insight into the SororiNet as desired.

- ▼: The slicer's access is denied, and the PC is immediately kicked out of the system entirely. This requires the slicer to start over again.
- ☹: For each ☹ resulting from this check, system security programs are made aware of an intrusion attempt. As long as these programs are aware of a potential breach in security, the slicing PC suffers one ■ to all checks made during this session.
- ☹ ☹: If two or more ☹ result, the Sorority system operator is informed of the intrusion.
- ⚡: Active security systems in the SororiNet node cause a static burst to fry the slicer's equipment. Not only does this kick the Player Character out of the system, but the slicer is unable to utilize the affected gear until it is replaced or repaired.

The level of security utilized by the gateway is suspiciously high, and the slicing character may guess (correctly) that the required information is located behind it. Accessing the gateway requires an upgraded **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check**.

The final SororiNet gateway is where the Veiled Sorority's important data is kept, including the coordinates of the pirates' base in Blackwind Crater. This is the PCs' ultimate goal, and the information can be located with an upgraded **Average (◆◆) Computers check**. If the PCs find the slicing too difficult, this information could also be found via investigating further in the SaleuQuest office, or through additional questioning of Krezo and Lind.

ALERTING LATHE

If Lathe is alerted at any point during the PC's infiltration of SororiNet, she immediately initiates a trace and attempts to completely eject the PC from the node. If she can force the intruder out, Lathe shuts the node down entirely so that she can inform her superiors and diagnose any damage that might have been done. Any subsequent Computers checks attempted by the PC, even those made to resist Lathe's trace attempts, receive ■■.

Lathe's attempt to trace the slicer's signal is more problematic for the party. The slicing PC must make an upgraded **opposed Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Com-**

puters check to resist the trace. With a success, Lathe's trace attempt fails; otherwise, Lathe succeeds in tracing the intrusion back to the PC. For each ☹ generated during this check, the slicer has two additional turns to act before Lathe shuts the node down entirely, locking the PC out. A PC may spend ⚡ to disconnect Lathe from SororiNet and thus prevent her from shutting down the node.

Should the PC generate any ☹ during the trace attempt, Lathe is able to glean some form of identifying information from the PC's signal. While such information won't identify the PC outright, it provides enough information for the Veiled Sorority to investigate. If the PC generates ⚡, Lathe is able to identify the PC immediately (but not the PC's location), whether or not the trace attempt is successful, and the static burst ejects the slicer, as per the **Slicing 101** sidebar above.

Lathe only attempts to trace the PC once before shutting the node down, assuming she is able to do so. If her trace attempt is successful, Lathe sends the data to a Sorority kill team in Taleucema, and its members waste little time converging on the party's location. Unless the PCs think to run some type of diagnostic test to see whether their signal was traced (which requires an **Average [◆◆] Computers check**), they may have no idea that a group of unexpected guests is on the way.

LATHE, SORORITY SLICER [RIVAL]

Lathe is one of the Sorority's best slicers on Saleucami. She's been assigned to monitor the planet's SororiNet node, and the job couldn't suit her better. Though rarely seen outside the confines of her apartment in Taleucema, Lathe emerges from time to time to replenish her supply of booster blue. She is a short, slight wisp of a human woman in her early twenties, with short-cropped red hair and hazel eyes.



Skills: Brawl 2, Computers 3, Discipline 2, Knowledge (Education) 2, Knowledge (Underworld) 3, Mechanics 2, Perception 3.

Talents: Defensive Slicing 2 (when defending computer systems, add ■■ to opponent's checks).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Brass knuckles (Brawl; Damage 2; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3), heavy clothing (+1 soak), slicer gear, datapad, tool kit, three doses of booster blue.

THE SORORITY KILL TEAM

If summoned by Lathe after she successfully traces the PCs, the team converges on the PCs' location within ten minutes. The team consists of four pirates and their leader, a male Barabel known by the nickname "Krash." The team can be split into two groups or its numbers adjusted as desired; it can also be used in the Vault (see page 31) if the GM wants to present a more potent foe there. The GM could also have the kill team or even a local gang (see the sidebar on page 20) menace the PCs while their slicer is occupied, to heighten the tension during the scene.

KRASH, SORORITY KILL TEAM LEADER [RIVAL]

Krash is a large and imposing Barabel shockboxer who washed out after a lost bout that nearly killed him. Disgraced, he turned to drink and spice until he met with a Sorority recruiter in a cantina. He has since recovered from his shame and addiction, and dedicates himself to the Sorority's business on Saleucami.



Skills: Brawl 3, Cool 2, Leadership, Melee 2, Ranged (Light) 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), shock gloves (Brawl; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Stun 3), armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak).

SORORITY KILL TEAM MEMBER [MINION]

Coming from various species, genders, and backgrounds, the only thing that unites the four members of the kill team is their loyalty to the Sorority. They are well paid and live reasonably good lives in Taleucema.



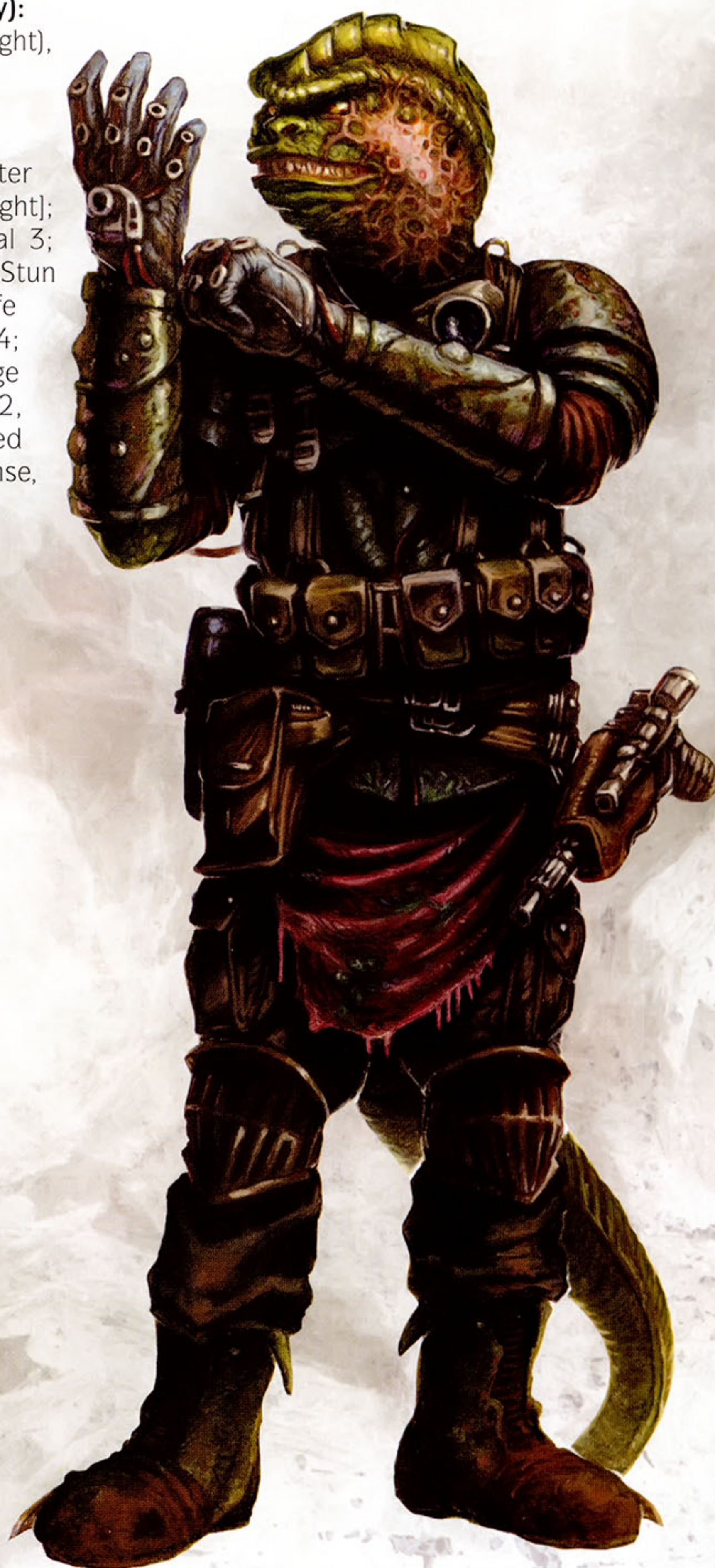
Skills (group only):

Melee, Ranged (Light), Vigilance.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak).



BLACKWIND CRATER

Blackwind Crater is a large, isolated crater over 250 kilometers northeast of Taleucema. Because of its subterranean hot springs, the crater's interior is a sweltering combination of jungle and marshland. Its walls are particularly steep and treacherous (requiring a **Hard (◆◆◆) Athletics check** to climb down), and the various species native to Blackwind Crater have long been isolated from others of their kind on the planet's surface.

The crater is roughly six kilometers east to west, fourteen kilometers north to south, and nearly 120 meters deep. A large pride of thaelos makes its home in the thick jungle canopy that shields the majority of the crater's floor from the dubious light of Saleucami's sun. A number of colorful avian species have found their way to the crater, and the air is often filled with the sound of bird calls.

GETTING TO BLACKWIND CRATER

Getting to the crater is the biggest immediate challenge the Player Characters face. If they possess their own ship, they can fly to the crater, but landing requires a **Hard (◆◆◆) Piloting (Space) check** to navigate the thick jungle canopy. ▼ prevents the PCs from landing in the crater altogether, while a ☹ results in a crash. For each ☹ generated on the Piloting check, the PCs' ship suffers one point of hull trauma as the hull is dented and torn by the trees.

Alternatively, the PCs can use an airspeeder to gain access to the crater. Piercing the jungle canopy at the floor of the crater is a much simpler operation in a small and maneuverable airspeeder, requiring an **Average (◆◆) Piloting (Planetary) check**. Non-combat airspeeders are available for rent in Taleucema at the rate of 75 credits per day; see the stat block on page 248 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook if needed.

THE 1ST PLATOON

After the Clone Wars ended, the Empire retired many clone troopers from action. Some went on to form mercenary units, such as the one now patrolling within Blackwind Crater. This group, which kept its original formation name of the 1st Platoon, grew a reputation across the Outer Rim as a reliable fighting unit. Rumor has it that members took their final "retirement pay" by making off with caches of armor and weaponry.

It's been several decades since they formed the mercenary unit, though, and finding work that doesn't violate their sense of honor has become harder and harder. Several years ago, the platoon landed on Saleucami and managed to gain employment with the Sorority as long-term guards outside of its bunker lair in the crater. It is not as honorable as their previous jobs, but their numbers have dwindled over the years, and they are not the formidable force they once were.

Unfortunately for the clones, they have aged at an accelerated rate. Despite their chronological age—near to forty years old—they are physically closer to seventy or eighty years old. The fact that the clones were created to be healthier, stronger, and faster than the average human has served them well, but they are no longer in their prime. In addition to casualties caused by the local fauna or rival smuggling groups, several clones have succumbed to old age in the years they've been patrolling Blackwind Crater. Of the original twenty-seven troopers in the platoon, only five members remain active.

The Sorority occasionally provides the troopers with supplies—ammunition, rations, medical supplies, and other sundries—as well as token payments. However, neither group makes much effort to communicate with the other. The Sorority views the clones as ancient relics, something the surviving troopers dread might be true. The troopers view the Sorority as ignoble pirates and criminals, but with no other prospects for better service, they have resigned themselves to an end here in the jungle.

THE BARRACKS

The clone troopers make their home within a series of tunnels in the eastern wall of Blackwind Crater. They have completely explored the caverns and have been unable to discover any other egress from them. They refer to the caverns as "the Barracks," and they believe that their location is a well-kept secret.

The Barracks' entrance is well-disguised and highly defensible. At least one clone is always on guard duty while the others occupy themselves with tasks such as hunting, maintaining their equipment, and patrolling the immediate area surrounding the Barracks. Anyone walking within visual distance of the cave entrance must succeed on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check** to notice it.

Deep within the Barracks, past the area occupied by the troopers, is a chamber referred to as “the Mausoleum,” where dead troopers and their equipment are interred. The clones rarely visit the Mausoleum, for they have come to consider it to be a sacred but haunted place where no one outside their brotherhood may tread.

ZEKE, CLONE TROOPER PLATOON LEADER [NEMESIS]

Zeke was a junior sergeant at the end of the Clone Wars and became a valued part of the mercenary band of retired platoon comrades. In the years that followed, he found himself rising in rank as other members fell in action. Just prior to landing on Saleucami, he became leader of the group.

Zeke is an excellent commander, but over the years he has grown distant and cold as more and more of his men have died. He was nearly killed by a pride of thaelos in Blackwind Crater; if not for Oake’s medical skills, Zeke would have lost more than just his left arm. Despite this, he is still a capable and deadly trooper.



Skills: Athletics 2, Discipline 3, Leadership 4, Melee 2, Ranged (Heavy) 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Resilience 3, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Point Blank 1 (add one damage to one hit of successful Ranged [Heavy] or Ranged [Light] attacks made while at short range or engaged).

Abilities: Squad Leader (spend a maneuver to direct one clone trooper within medium range. The clone trooper may perform an immediate free maneuver or add ☐ to the trooper’s next check), Teamwork (add ☐ to all checks during combat while within medium range of one or more clone trooper allies).

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), 1 frag grenade (Ranged [Light]; Damage 8; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Blast 6, Limited Ammo 1), worn clone trooper armor (+2 soak), utility belt.

OAKE, VETERAN CLONE TROOPER [RIVAL]

Oake began as the platoon’s medic, but when its last gunner was killed, he was “promoted” to fill the gap. He does his best to keep the other troopers healthy, even though he lacks any formal medical facilities and can only use what supplies the pirates occasionally provide. If the GM decides that any of the clone troopers wish to make contact with the PCs, Oake is the most likely candidate.



Skills: Athletics 2, Discipline 2, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Ranged (Heavy) 2, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Point Blank 1 (add one damage to one hit of successful Ranged [Heavy] or Ranged [Light] attacks made while at short range or engaged).



Abilities: Hard of Hearing (add ■ when attempting a Perception check based on auditory cues), Teamwork (add □ to all checks during combat while within medium range of one or more clone trooper allies).

Equipment: Light repeating blaster with sling (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 11; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Cumbersome 3, Pierce 1), blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), worn clone trooper armor (+2 soak), utility belt.

JAYK, RAFE, AND TOJO, VETERAN CLONE TROOPERS [RIVAL]

Jayk, Rafe, and Tojo are the last remaining “rank-and-file” clone troopers in the platoon. As generalists, they are the backbone of the group, providing mobile firepower while Zeke gives orders and Oake lays down a heavy field of fire.

While Jayk is the smart aleck of the group and Tojo is level-headed and stable under fire, Rafe is generally dour, pessimistic, and easily aggravated.

2	2	2	2	3	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 5		W. THRESHOLD 13		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills: Athletics 2, Discipline 2, Melee 2, Ranged (Heavy) 2, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Point Blank 1 (add one damage to one hit of successful Ranged [Heavy] or Ranged [Light] attacks made while at short range or engaged).

Abilities: Near-Sighted (Jayk only; add ■ to ranged attacks and vision-based Perception checks at long and extreme range), Tremor (Rafe only; add ■ to any Agility-checks), Poor Memory (Tojo only; has difficulty remembering specific details, and must succeed at an **Average (◆ ◆) Vigilance check** to recall anything important), Teamwork (add □ to all checks during combat while within medium range of one or more clone trooper allies).

Equipment: Blaster rifle (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Long]); Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), worn clone trooper armor (+2 soak), utility belt.

ENCOUNTERING THE CLONES

The clone troopers are always on the lookout, and any ship or airspeeder that lands in Blackwind Crater is suspect. They mobilize immediately and seek out any intruders, observing from a distance before deciding what to do. If the PCs display Republic insignia, or clone trooper armor or armaments, the clones attempt to make contact with them in order to learn more about these possible comrades.

If the PCs have no such insignia or weaponry, the clones track them for a short while to determine where they are headed and what their intentions might be. Unless the PCs display obvious evidence of Sorority allegiance, the clones correctly assume they are enemies and set out to attack them. The platoon immediately pulls back and circles around the PCs in order to set up an ambush, opening fire when the PCs reach an opening in the foliage.

The clones are capable combatants and familiar with the terrain. The gloomy atmosphere of the crater floor causes any unassisted Perception checks to suffer ■, but PCs who succeed on a **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Perception** or **Easy (◆) Vigilance check** notice the sound of something moving through the dense jungle, or a small flash of white armor in the darkness.

If the PCs attempt to communicate with the clones, the clones’ response depends on how they are treated and how the PCs conduct themselves. The clones know their current masters are dishonorable, but they have no other employment prospects. Oake and Rafe in particular feel that a final, honorable battle would be a more fitting end than rotting and dying one by one in the jungle. If the PCs can win the platoon over through **opposed Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Charm** or **Deception checks**, the clones can be valuable allies, as they have firsthand knowledge of the Sorority’s bunker.

OTHER ENCOUNTERS IN BLACKWIND CRATER

Aside from the encounters detailed here, there are plenty of other threats in Blackwind Crater. The clearest of these can come from a large pride of thaelos that roosts in the dark jungle canopy covering the floor of the crater. Both vicious and intensely territorial, the thaelos have made several attempts to kill their clone trooper neighbors over the years, with varying degrees of success.

If the GM wishes to give the PCs and clones a reason to work together, the savage thaelos or even a massive nuuno can serve as a mutual enemy to fight in common cause. See page 15 for the profiles for these beasts.

RAIDING THE VAULT

Fifteen years after the Clone Wars came to an end, a Veiled Sorority survey team arrived in Blackwind Crater to take stock of the ruined Separatist facility, to gauge its usefulness as a hidden base. As luck had it, much of the structure—which was partly built into the crater wall—was in good condition. Dubbed “the Vault” by the Sorority pirates stationed there, the structure was refurbished one year later and became the best location for storing plunder on Saleucami.

The Vault is home to approximately thirty pirates at any given time, and it features a landing pad where airspeeders and small spacecraft can touch down. In addition, the Veiled Sorority has installed a number of security features, including two medium laser cannons designed to fend off attacking aircraft and starships. At least one airspeeder is available to the pirates around the clock.

If the pirates are alerted to the PCs’ presence in the crater, the entire structure is locked down. All pirates in the facility immediately report to their battle stations and prepare to repel intruders, much as if they were aboard a ship.

Unless they plan to access the base through the landing bay on level two, the PCs must enter through a pair of external blast doors on the ground floor. The interior of the Vault is laser-carved from the rock of the crater. The walls are smooth but occasionally marred by what appears to be old damage from blasters or small explosives. Light tubes are embedded in the ceiling; in the case of an assault or intrusion these switch to red emergency illumination.

The following describes the Vault and its rooms on a chamber-by-chamber basis. The room numbers correspond to those on the map on page 32.

THE VAULT, LEVEL ONE

The ground level of the Vault is designed for maintaining the crew, and includes facilities to support them: two barracks rooms, a fully stocked galley, and refreshers. When the PCs approach the entrance from outside, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The fifty meters of ground between the jungle and the crater wall has been cleared of all vegetation and cover, providing what appears to be a killing field. You can see a pair of blast doors embedded in the rough rock wall of the crater. While the crater wall is otherwise featureless, a large platform emerges from it at least thirty meters above the ground. Two laser cannon barrels, motionless in the gloom, flank the platform.

Player Characters who succeed on an **Average (◆◆) Perception check** notice two thin bunker slits to either side of the blast doors. Unless they have some kind of enhanced vision, they are unable to make out the guards within the bunkers.

1. ENTRYWAY

The Vault’s primary blast doors are closed and locked from the inside. Skilled thieves and slicers can hot-wire or hack the external panel to open them, but this requires either a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check** or a **Hard (◆◆◆) Skulduggery check**. A  result on either check ruins the panel, making further efforts to electronically open the doors from this vantage point largely fruitless.

Beyond the doors is a wide corridor leading to another pair of doors. If the Vault is currently on alert, the doors are closed and two Sorority pirates are standing guard here.

SORORITY PIRATE [MINION]

The pirates at the Sorority base here represent all of the more common species in the sector. Despite their variation, they each wear a red armband tied around the left bicep or similar anatomical equivalent. All are blooded veterans who believe they guard the Pirate Queen herself on Saleucami.

If desired, a Sorority kill team (see page 27) can also be found inside the Vault, patrolling and perhaps eager for some revenge.

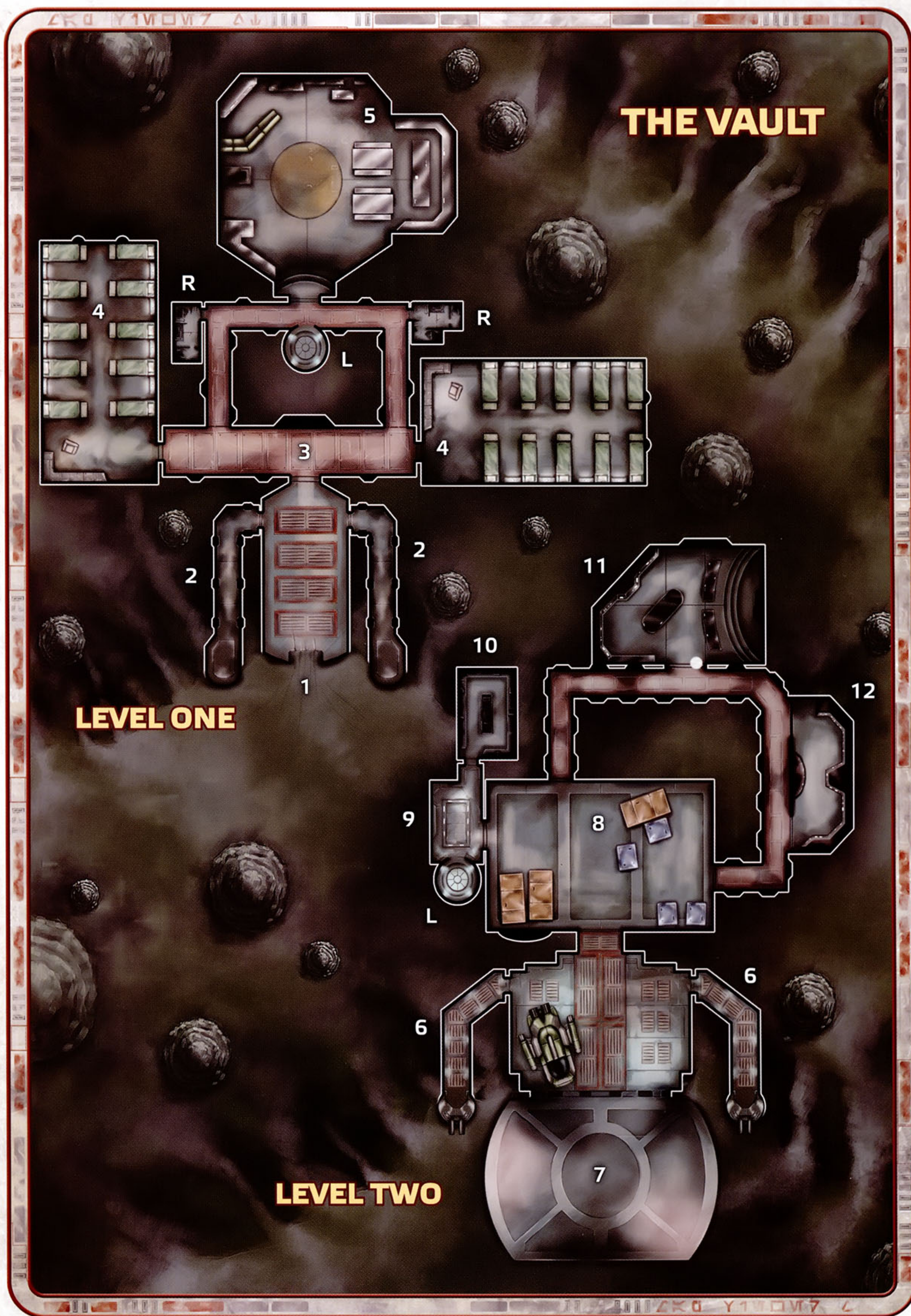
2	3	1	2	1	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 3		W. THRESHOLD 5		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills (group only): Coercion, Cool, Melee, Ranged (Heavy), Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster carbine (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting) or heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1) or vibrosword (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 1), heavy clothing (+ 1 soak).



2. BUNKERS

The two bunkers that flank the entryway blast doors are staffed by one Sorority pirate each equipped with blaster carbines. If the Vault is currently on alert, the guards are at their posts and looking for intruders emerging from the jungle.

If no alarm has been raised, it's likely that the two guards are sleeping or otherwise occupying themselves. Allow each guard to make an **Average** (◆◆) **Discipline check**. Failure indicates that this guard is not paying attention, while failure plus any number of ☉ indicates that this guard is sleeping.

Anyone attempting to target the guards in their bunkers from outside must contend with their cover, which adds ■■ to any shots that character takes.

3. MAIN CORRIDOR

The main corridor is the major connecting passageway on the ground floor of the Vault. It connects the entryway, barracks, galley, refresher, and lift to the second level. If the Vault is not on alert, the passage is empty and the doors at either end of it (leading into the barracks) are closed.

If the Vault is on alert when the PCs arrive here, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

This wide corridor is empty and clean, and there are open doors at either end of it. Motion from one of the doors catches your eye, and you see a single pirate with a blaster aimed right at you!

The pirates here have been waiting to ambush anyone daring to come in through the entryway. Pirates firing from either of the two doors gain light cover (see page 213 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook) on any attacks made against them. The barracks hosts two more pirates each, but given the confines, only one pirate can fire from a doorway at a time.

4. BARRACKS

Assuming the Vault is not on alert, the two barracks chambers are occupied by three or four sleeping pirates each. The rooms consist of rows of twin bunks, numbering sixteen beds total. Personal effects are scattered throughout the barracks, and jackets and slung weapons dangle from bedposts.

If on alert, any pirates here are instead battle-ready, with incredibly itchy trigger fingers. They attempt to hold the PCs off, but if the pirates are outgunned or outnumbered, they seek to seal the barracks doors and create some kind of barricade with beds and other available materials.

5. GALLEY/RECREATION

The Vault's galley is designed as a recreation room of sorts. If the Vault is not yet on alert, six pirates are lounging here, enjoying a meal as they watch the video screens. If they have been alerted, two have taken the lift to the second level. The remaining four have flipped a couple of tables to use as cover against anyone attempting to gain access to the room, causing PCs to suffer ■ when shooting at them.

L. LIFT

The Vault's lift is a simple elevator between the first and second levels of the facility. It can be turned off from either point via an access panel and can be turned back on with an **Average** (◆◆) **Computers** or **Mechanics check**.

R. REFRESHER

The refresher facilities on the Vault's first level are unremarkable. The unit on the eastern end of the hallway is currently occupied, its door locked. The occupant is a startled, unarmed pirate, who surrenders without a fight if given the opportunity.

THE VAULT, LEVEL TWO

The second, upper level of the Vault is where much of the Sorority's work gets done. It serves as a landing bay, and stores plunder and supplies.

6. LASER TURRET ACCESS

Each of these narrow corridors leads to a turret emplacement consisting of a heavy laser cannon, suitable for shooting any threatening vehicles (possibly including the Player Characters' ship) that might approach from the air (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]).

7. FLIGHT DECK/LANDING PAD

PCs who brave the Vault's flight deck find it contains a functional airspeeder, as well as tools and maintenance equipment. Whether the Vault is on alert or not, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The Vault's flight deck smells of exhaust, ozone, and lubricants. A single airspeeder, painted in powder blue with the words "SaleuQuest Overland" stenciled on its sides, sits off to one side. Tools and other machines are scattered about the room's floor. Two pirates with blaster carbines stand opposite one another, each near an unmarked door.

8. CARGO BAY

The cargo bay is stacked ceiling to floor with cargo containers, crates, boxes, barrels, and other similar items. A plethora of cover is available, and any character in the cargo bay can spend a maneuver to locate a suitable hiding spot.

Four Sorority pirates (see page 31), along with two ASP-series labor droids, are positioned in the room appropriate for their alert status. The droids make no hostile moves and instead remain at their respective locations until any conflict has been resolved. The pirates, on the other hand, fight desperately to keep their attackers at bay. The number of pirates can be adjusted as needed to provide a short but challenging firefight for the Player Characters.

If the PCs examine the bulky cargo containers, they see that they bear Consortium symbols and contain items ranging from trade goods to heavy machinery.

9. LIFT ROOM

This is a simple hallway that connects the lift to the rest of the Vault's second level. Two pirates positioned near the doors stand guard. If they are on alert, they immediately fire at anyone who emerges from the lift. Otherwise, they watch for intruders as per their regular orders, but they are not ready for a fight.

10. ARMORY

The door to the Vault's armory is locked, and for good reason. The armory contains a wide variety of weaponry and ordnance, some of it highly destructive and more suited to breaching heavy ship hulls in boarding actions. The armory door and accompanying lock are both high-security versions, and they require either a **Hard (◆◆◆) Skulduggery check** or a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check** to open successfully.

If the PCs gain access to the armory, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

This small room is stacked with weapon crates, many of which display Imperial markings that have been stenciled over with Consortium symbols. Some of the crates appear to hold blasters, while others contain power cells and grenades.

The PCs can take a few moments to reload or rearm with the discovered blaster pistols. They may find the armory's grenades (a mix of frag and stun grenades, with exact numbers left to the GM's discretion) useful as they proceed through the remainder of the Vault. The GM should keep the tension high, however, with loud alarms and the sounds of running guards in the halls if the PCs are spending too much time here.

11. CONTROL CENTER

The Vault's control center lies behind a sealed blast door. All of the facility's various systems can be accessed from within. The sealed door can be breached with a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check** or **Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Skulduggery check**. Once the PCs gain access to the control center, proceed to the section entitled **Confronting the Pirate Queen**, on page 35.

12. COMM STATION

The comm station is an unused room filled with dust and old, dilapidated consoles. If the PCs enter this room, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

This musty room is dark, stuffy, and littered with garbage. Several old terminals, damaged by blaster fire or explosives long ago, hulk uselessly in the chamber. As you squint in the poor lighting, you think you can make out old bones amid the rubble. Whatever happened here took place a very long time ago.

If the PCs are entering this room prior to attempting to access the control center, the Queen's bodyguard, Mandi, lurks here, awaiting her chance to escape while the PCs are otherwise occupied. If the PCs succeed on an **opposed Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check** versus Mandi's **Stealth**, they notice her crouching in the shadows behind a terminal with her pistol drawn.

If noticed and confronted, Mandi attempts to talk her way out of the situation rather than fight. She tells the PCs that the Queen is in the control room calling for reinforcements, but that she won't be there for long if they continue to waste their time with her. If all else fails, Mandi draws her sword with her left hand and attempts to fight her way out.

If the PCs are entering this room after storming the control center, Mandi is long gone. If the airspeeder is still available on the flight deck, she uses it to make her escape while the PCs are otherwise occupied. If the vehicle has been destroyed, she makes her way into the jungle along a hidden path out of the crater.

MANDI, REVAH'S BODYGUARD [RIVAL]

Mandi is the only member of the Sorority on Saleucami who knows that Revah is not the real Pirate Queen. She possesses ambitions of her own, however, and these include engineering Revah's capture or death so that she can claim her mask on Saleucami. To this end, Mandi ensured that Krezo Wasanti knew the name of the pirate base's location when she sold him a large amount of Consortium plunder.



2 BRAWN	3 AGILITY	3 INTELLECT	2 CUNNING	2 WILLPOWER	3 PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 4	W. THRESHOLD 14	M/R DEFENSE 0 0			

Skills: Athletics 2, Coercion 3, Deception 2, Leadership 2, Melee 3, Piloting (Planetary) 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Stealth 3.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Deadly Accuracy (add two damage to one hit of successful attack made using Ranged [Light]).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibrosword (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 1), laminate armor (+2 soak), secured comlink.

CONFRONTING THE PIRATE QUEEN

Once the PCs gain access to the control room, they are confronted by the Pirate Queen and her guards. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The Vault's control room is a large chamber filled with blinking computer terminals and miscellaneous equipment. At the center of the room stands a tall woman surrounded by pirate guards, her face obscured by a silver mask. She's dressed in fine clothing, as if she were about to leave for a dinner engagement.

"I cannot allow you to take me away, but I will make you an offer. Allow me to match the payment you expect to receive from the Consortium, and then leave this place at once. I guarantee we'll all be much happier that way."

At this point, the Queen allows the Player Characters to consider her offer or discuss it amongst themselves. She's unwilling to allow them too many concessions, and she orders her people to open fire if her offer does not appear to be seriously considered. There are two Sorority pirates (see page 31) armed with heavy blaster pistols for each PC, divided into two minion groups.

Like Revah, Mandi is a human woman, but the comparison ends there. Mandi is in her early thirties, with olive skin, braided brown hair, and dark eyes. She dresses in an extravagant manner, with a ragged rust-red cape over a laced black blouse, and skin-tight leather breeches tucked into cuffed, knee-high boots. She carries a vibrosword in a scabbard on her belt, and looks every bit the buccaneer of legend.

REMEMBER GRAF?

If the PCs allowed Graf his own chance at “vengeance” in their hunt for the Queen, this is the moment he’s been waiting for. Though he is quite happy to exact his own revenge on a pirate or two, he becomes utterly ruthless when the PCs confront the Queen. When the Queen makes her demands, Graf points his blaster at the nearest PC and announces that they should all do as his Queen asks, if they know what’s good for them.

The Queen’s strategy is a simple one—to kill the Player Characters as efficiently as possible. Failing that, she attempts to escape while her guards die on her behalf. If she is killed or captured and her mask removed, the Queen’s features shift dramatically as they are no longer being modified by the mask’s integrated holographic projector. If she is alive, her voice is also noticeably different than it was. Regardless of the circumstances, though, the Queen keeps her silence and allows the PCs to come to their own conclusions.

REVAH, DECOY PIRATE QUEEN [NEMESIS]


The leader of the Veiled Sorority on Saleucami is Revah, a middle-aged human female who has been with the pirate group for over a decade. One of the Queen’s decoys, she wears a mask that is nearly identical to the one worn by the Sorority’s leader. Without her mask, she appears as a rather plain human female with high cheekbones, blue eyes, and braided grey hair.

As far as Saleucami’s Sorority pirates are concerned, she is the Queen; only one or two individuals know the truth behind her duplicity. Despite being a surrogate queen, Revah is a canny operator and leader who hopes to be elevated to the Queen’s position in time. She feels that crushing the PCs and foiling the Consortium’s plans to bring the Queen to justice should help her dreams become realized.





Skills: Charm 3, Coercion 3, Cool 2, Deception 3, Discipline 3, Knowledge (Underworld) 3, Leadership 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Soft Spot (may spend one Destiny Point to add four damage to one hit of a successful non-starship/vehicle attack).

Abilities: Pirate Leader (may spend a maneuver giving orders to other pirate allies within medium range, granting them  on their next check).

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), Sorority mask (upgrades all

Deception skill checks made to disguise the wearer once; removes up to   added to all Perception, Vigilance, and combat skill checks due to darkness, smoke, or other environmental effects that obscure vision), heavy clothing (+1 soak).

SORORITY PIRATE QUEENSGUARD [MINION]

The pirates who guard the Queen—or at least the woman they believe to be the Queen—are some of the best the Sorority has to offer. They have proven their worth time and time again, stopping at nothing to keep their leader safe from harm. In addition to red armbands, each wears a crimson sash about the waist.



Skills (group only): Coercion, Cool, Melee, Ranged (Heavy), Vigilance.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster carbine (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroaxe (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Sunder, Vicious 3), armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak).

DEAD OR ALIVE

If the Player Characters defeat the Pirate Queen, either by capturing or killing her, they must return her personally in order to claim their bounty. If contacted with the good news, Venlana is quite excited by the PCs' success. She informs the PCs that she will meet them at a warehouse in Taleucema to take possession of the Queen, or whatever's left of her. Venlana makes sure to ask the PCs whether the Queen was wearing a mask of some kind, and whether the PCs were able to claim it as proof of her identity. She mentions that the mask is part and parcel of the deal, and that it must be given to her along with proof of the Queen's capture or death.

Unless the PCs have other adventures they wish to pursue in Blackwind Crater (such as looting the Vault for gear and credits at the GM's discretion), they can return to the Taleucema spaceport. When they arrive at the warehouse, Venlana and Porel are waiting for them. Venlana inspects the Queen quite thoroughly, whether or not she's alive, before asking the PCs for the mask. She congratulates the Player Characters on a job well done. If the Queen is still alive, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

Venlana tucks the mask away as she gives the Queen a final, contemptuous glance. "So much trouble caused by one woman and her motley band of thieves."

The Queen sighs, answering, "It's hardly over."

"I doubt that very much," Venlana replies before nodding to Porel. The Twi'lek produces a slim blaster pistol from within his jacket.

The Queen looks alarmed. "You can't be serious," she says. It almost sounds like a plea.

"You've served your purpose," Venlana says, nodding to Porel.

The sound of the blaster is very loud in the confines of the warehouse.

With the Queen dead, Venlana indicates that the amount of money they are owed (having subtracted the amount they were advanced) will be transferred to them shortly. She mentions that the transfer for any further funds, such as those gained from other achievements they have made, should take no longer than a day or two.

Porel puts the Queen into a body bag and seals it before hoisting it over his shoulder with ease. With that, Venlana excuses herself and leaves the warehouse with Porel close behind her.

SURPRISE, SURPRISE

A few hours pass uneventfully before the PCs are contacted once again by Venlana via comlink. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The familiar voice of Venlana crackles at the other end of the comlink. Telltale electronic noise, almost too subtle to notice, indicates that her comm signal is being scrambled.

"We have a problem," she says, her words tense and deliberate. "The Queen you brought to us was an impostor."

Venlana informs the PCs of the events of the past hour. In short, the mask worn by the "Queen" was a facsimile of the real thing. As if that weren't bad enough, another Consortium shipment, previously a highly guarded secret, is now also in the hands of the Sorority. Although the ship's crew risked Tyber Zann's wrath and surrendered without a struggle, the pirates broke their own tradition and killed them anyway.

After eliminating the ship's crew and jettisoning the bodies into space, the Veiled Sorority transmitted a message to the Zann Consortium: "Queens do not die so easily."

EPISODE I XP REWARDS

Standard experience point rewards for **Episode I**:

- Following up on one or more of the leads provided by Venlana: 5 XP per lead investigated
- Collecting additional useful intelligence for the Zann Consortium: 5 XP
- Meeting with the clone trooper mercenaries in Blackwind Crater: 5 XP
- Fighting their way through the Vault: 5–10 XP
- Additional encounters: 5 XP

As always, the GM should award bonus XP for good roleplaying and engaging with the PCs' Motivations and Obligations.





GOING TO GROUND

*"Zann is finally getting serious about the Queen.
I smell blood, death, and opportunity!"*

—Illo Vandin

In **Episode II** of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the PCs learn that the Queen they captured or killed in **Episode I** is an imposter. Tracing a signal sent by the gloating pirate, the PCs travel to Ord Mantell's capital of Worlport to find the real Queen's hidden palace. Unfortunately, the PCs need to perform some objectionable deeds if they want to earn the information. This chapter includes:

- **Ord Mantell:** An overview of Ord Mantell, providing additional information on the planet's history, population, and inhabitants.
- **Worlport:** A gazetteer detailing Ord Mantell's capital city of Worlport.
- **A Bloodbug in the Ointment:** The adventure's opening reveals the imposter Queen and defines the PCs' new assignment on Ord Mantell.
- **Quid Pro Quo:** Venlana's Worlport contact, Jander, arranges a meeting with a mysterious crime boss named Illo Vandin. Vandin has information that could lead the PCs to the Queen, but he is not about to offer it for free.

- **A Gambler Scorned:** Vandin directs the PCs to speak with Micael Torval, a talented sabacc player who is the Queen's lover.
- **Clearing the Air:** Now that they know the location of the Queen's palace beneath Worlport, the PCs disguise themselves in order to infiltrate the complex.
- **Intermission:** Though the elusive Queen is still at large, the PCs have likely captured Ryale Wei, her majordomo. Under duress, Ryale reveals some new secrets, as well as the impetus for the next stage of the adventure.

At the start of this episode, the PCs should still be in Taleucema when Venlana requests a meeting at the Paradise cantina (see page 48). If the PCs have already managed to leave Saleucami behind, they may hold the meeting via comm terminal aboard their ship instead. Though Venlana disapproves of this breach in protocol, she is willing to put aside her misgivings, considering the urgency of the situation.

ORD MANTELL

As the majority of this episode takes place in Worlport, the planetary capital of Ord Mantell, a wealth of information concerning that world is presented here. For a more general overview of Ord Mantell, see page 361 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

HISTORY

Corellian explorers employed by the Galactic Republic colonized Ord Mantell nearly twelve thousand years ago. The expanding Republic desired a world usable as an ordnance/regional depot, and—aside from the hostile Savrips—Ord Mantell was habitable and conveniently located. Unfortunately, conflicts between colonists and Savrips caused no end of trouble for the Republic's local authorities.

Despite the low but clear intellect of the Savrips, the Republic portrayed them as mindless, dangerous beasts that needed to be culled. It placed large bounties on Savrip hides, drawing hunters from across the galaxy to Ord Mantell. Overhunting drove the Savrips to near-extinction, but the hardy and cunning creatures were never completely eradicated.

Though the Republic curtailed the world's native fauna, it was never able to tame the world's settlers. Ord Mantell's proximity to the galaxy's lawless frontier, combined with the relaxed—some say “criminal”—attitudes of its original Corellian colonists, ensured the world would never be quite as civilized as the Republic Senate preferred.

Nevertheless, Ord Mantell continued to serve the Republic as an ordnance/regional depot for centuries. As its significance to the Republic dwindled—most notably, after a corrupt admiral sold off the local fleet—the planet became attractive to free agents and smugglers looking for a convenient stopover. The outright departure of the Republic military only increased Ord Mantell's allure to the galaxy's seedier elements. This appeal was reinforced by the fact that the Republic's military spaceports on this world were never decommissioned. Still fully operational, these abandoned ports quickly became home bases for opportunists and criminals, as well as for corporate elements such as Czerka.

Despite its reputation as a shadowport, Ord Mantell remained a profitable and prosperous planet. Though Ord Mantell continued to be a member of the Galactic Republic, its senators were rarely sent to Coruscant, and the majority of votes they cast in the Senate were abstentions. As much of Ord Mantell's economy was driven by untaxed criminal enterprise, tax revenues provided to the Republic were often meager at best.

ORD MANTELL DURING THE CIVIL WAR

When the war between the Galactic Republic and the Sith Empire ended, a number of scandals rocked Ord Mantell's capital city of Worlport. The most visible revealed that some cabinet members had accepted bribes to aid the Sith. The Senate investigated, eventually removing the cabinet members in question. However, a small—yet vocal—segment of Ord Mantell's citizens had had enough.

These citizens declared that the Republic's response to the corruption had been little more than a half-measure. They insisted that an independent Ord Mantell could police its own and ensure that common citizens would no longer be exploited by the ruling class.

A cry for secession rose above the din, and soon the entire planet was involved in a terrible civil war. Sibling fought sibling, and the world's industrial capacity was reduced to rubble. The Mantellian separatist forces seemed unbeatable, and Republic reinforcements were called in to help quell the insurrection. Despite the fanaticism that fueled the secessionists, the Republic military and native militias loyal to the Republic eventually overcame their foes.

Even today, the scars of this civil war can be seen in battlefields that have long been abandoned. Though the secessionists were defeated, something of their rebellious nature remains in the hearts of all Mantellians. Should they ever decide to rise up again, the conflict might very well go in their favor.

During the Clone Wars, the Republic investigated reports of nearby Separatist conflicts. Diplomats approached Ord Mantell's government, hoping to reestablish a small (and hopefully profitable) presence. In addition to helping to repair the damage from recent skirmishes between Darth Maul's Shadow Collective and the Separatists, the Republic wished to reoccupy and renovate a handful of its original starports, building barracks and weapon storage facilities for its military forces. The Senate also planned to bolster Ord Mantell's manufacturing capacity in an attempt to raise the planet's pitiful tax revenue.

Though this did augment the planet's economic contributions to the Republic, it was never the windfall it was intended to be. Nevertheless, while the Senate's overtures were initially rebuffed by Worlport's ruling class, the proper bribes to Ord Mantell's governor guaranteed the planet would remain a Republic world for years to come.



PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Ord Mantell's population consists of many varied species, referred to collectively as "Mantellians." Outside of the segregated villages and communities in the wastes and mountains beyond Worlport, no single species dominates the population. Wherever one looks, both exotic and familiar aliens can be found with ease. While this might trouble travelers unused to such diversity, Ord Mantell's natives are quite comfortable with their planet's cosmopolitan nature.

Given the historically shady nature of their homeworld, Mantellians prize privacy and discretion above all things. When dealing with strangers, Mantellians often operate under simple pseudonyms or nicknames. Though polite and accommodating, Mantellians resist the urge to form strong relationships with people they do not know. Once their trust has been earned, however, they dispense with such pretenses and openly acknowledge partnerships.

To most outsiders unfamiliar with the cultural norms, the natives appear possess a mixture of competing personality traits. In settlements popular among tourists and pleasure-seekers, the overwhelming Mantellian attitude is congenial, inclusive, and welcoming.

This pleasant and hospitable behavior is undercut by a cagy and suspicious demeanor that surfaces behind closed doors, or far from the touristy locales. Until a stranger's worth has been ascertained, that person can expect to be treated as an outsider. Despite this distrust of strangers, though, Mantellians are still polite and civil—even to their enemies.

ORD MANTELL, THE CLONE WARS, AND THE SHADOW COLLECTIVE

Ord Mantell was blissfully devoid of any Republic presence when the Clone Wars ignited across the galaxy. Much of the planet's power was instead consolidated under Black Sun's banner. This resulted in the world becoming the last bastion of the Shadow Collective—Darth Maul's criminal empire cobbled together from elements of Black Sun, as well as Pyke and Mandalorian warriors.

When the Separatist forces attempted to stake a claim on Ord Mantell, the Shadow Collective violently resisted them. Maul was able to defeat Count Dooku and General Grievous's forces, but ended up moving the Shadow Collective away from the planet in an attempt to retain its secrecy. When the Republic arrived to investigate, they found nothing more than the struggle's aftermath.

BLOCKADE RUNNERS' DERBY

One of Ord Mantell's most notable events is the Blockade Runners' Derby. Originally established in the comet cloud that surrounds Ord Mantell, the Derby began as a good-natured competition between smugglers, rogue pilots, and other thrill-seekers. Over the years, the stakes have risen with the risk, and competitors have come to take it much more seriously than its founders intended.

The Derby has been held every year since 69 BBY. Many famous (and infamous) smugglers have participated, including three-time winner Han Solo. Prizes include lucrative (and less-than-legal) business opportunities, thousands of credits, and the prestige of being the best pilot in the sector.

The Blockade Runners' Derby runs along a treacherous course that changes every year. Though good sportsmanship is expected of every participant, accidents and foul play still claim a large number of casualties. Ord Mantell's citizens closely follow each Derby, and countless fortunes have been gambled away in Worlport's casinos at the sound of the Derby's victory horn.

The Grand Marshal of the Blockade Runners' Derby is usually chosen from previous years' victors, though other pilots of great skill and bravery have been chosen as well. The Grand Marshal has the honor of piloting the pace craft through the course's twists and turns, officially starting the race at the appointed time, and declaring the victor, as well as awarding victors the prizes they have earned.

It is said that as long as the comet cloud clings to Ord Mantell, the Blockade Runners' Derby shall always take place. Considering the Mantellian view of the Derby and its importance to the world's culture, the race is sure to continue much longer than that.

Mantellian communities far from the bustle, commerce, and cosmopolitanism of major cities and starports are tightly knit and insular. Blending in with such a community is nearly impossible for strangers unless they know a member of the community who can vouch for them. Even then, respect must still be earned through a difficult and lengthy process built upon repetition and familiarity.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

As though Ord Mantell weren't already interesting enough, it is home to countless locales and environments unique in the galaxy.

THE SCRAPLANDS

North of Worlport lies a barren expanse of junkyards, strip mines, and dumping grounds collectively referred to as "the Scraplands." Thousands of years of detritus and garbage choke this unforgiving wasteland, forming an environment unique to Ord Mantell. While other such wastelands exist across this world, none are as vast or as inhospitable.

The Scraplands are perpetually cloaked by thick smog that blows north from Worlport. The smog, combined with the smoke from thousands of slow-burning fires beneath the rubbish (some of which have been burning for centuries), makes breath masks indispensable survival tools. This toxic vapor impairs visibility, as well as respiration.

Compounding of the poisonous atmosphere, the Scraplands are rife with other dangers. The ground, formed from millennia of garbage and scrap, is often unstable. Towering piles of refuse can collapse without warning, forming dangerous "scrapslides." To make matters worse, Mantellian Savrips find the Scraplands to be productive hunting grounds.

The majority of the Scraplands' population consists of small groups of nomads who roam the wastes' expanse, picking through the garbage for more valuable materials as they go. Such bands are small and aligned by species, typically consisting of one or two family units.

Though their average mortality is high, many such groups thrive in the wastes. They survive by selling the still-usable scraps to junk dealers in Worlport, as well as to fringe communities.

Villages and small towns, which the nomads who traverse this region colloquially referred to as "squats," are common within the cluttered wastes. Despite their prevalence, these settlements aren't always easy to find in the Scraplands; they are generally buried, well-camouflaged, or both. Hospitality in such locations is also difficult to find, though it can be bought for a price.



YALAWUA

One squat of note in the Scraplands is Yalawua. Inhabited solely by numerous Jawas, the squat is akin to a huge insect hive in depth and complexity. The Jawas survive by selling and trading refurbished droids and machinery to neighboring communities. They are rumored to be excellent guides who know the region better than many trash-nomads.

No one knows how the Jawas made their way to Ord Mantell. Some spacers insist that having lost their community on Tatooine to a Tusken Raider attack, they traded what remained of their possessions in order to charter a vessel to a planet with new opportunities. Whatever the truth of this tale might be, Yalawua's Jawas have certainly made the best of their circumstances.

Mantellians have installed a number of armored hovertrain rail systems throughout the Scraplands over the centuries, though most have fallen into disrepair. Two of these lines are still maintained and used to transport cargo and individuals to the Scraplands' more civilized locations. The larger of the lines, commonly known as "the Worlport Line," runs out of a dilapidated station just north of Worlport. Though it only has two regularly scheduled destinations, anyone willing to pay the price can arrange a stop nearly anywhere along the line.

TEN MILE PLATEAU

Ten Mile Plateau is a flat expanse of uplands north of Worlport. Amid the Scraplands surrounding it on all sides, the plateau is an oasis rising up from the trash, smog, and noxious vapors like an island in the clouds. Though vegetation is sparse, a number of native species—including pterosaurs and Savrips—make their homes atop Ten Mile Plateau. Explorers and naturalists have attempted to learn more about the plateau's environment, but few have returned.

A stellar energy station was established on the plateau nearly a thousand years ago, but it was subsequently abandoned for unknown reasons. Historians point to Savrips as the likely cause of the station's desertion, but such reasoning has yet to be proven. In the time since, a number of groups and individuals have laid claim to the facility, but none have stayed—or survived—for more than a few years at a time.

WORLPORT

Worlport is the political and economic capital of Ord Mantell. It is a starport as well as a shadowport where anything can be found for the right price. Considered lawless by some, Worlport is an exotic destination for tourists from across the galaxy. Visitors flock to its numerous casinos, or come to enjoy Ord Mantell's illicit pleasures in an environment that is in equal parts seedy and opulent.

The city of Worlport is described in more detail on page 45.

THE CORAL COAST

The shoreline that spreads out southeast of Worlport is known as "the Coral Coast." Flotsam and jetsam litter the coastline's sandy beaches, much of it brought to shore by Ord Mantell's tides. Communities of scavengers and junk dealers thrive along the waterfront, picking through the detritus and refuse in search of salvage, useful materials, and objects of value. Though fortunes have been made on this murky shore, the best most of its residents can hope for is mere subsistence.

CREATURES AND CHALLENGES

Most of Ord Mantell's native species, such as Mantellian pterosaurs and the much-maligned Savrips, are descended from warm-blooded reptiles. Even the look of the Mantellian flutterplume, a dangerous avian scavenger festooned in colorful plumage, harkens back to the raptors of Ord Mantell's prehistory.

All of Ord Mantell's native species have been affected by the world's pollution, to some degree, and many have been driven to extinction. Those that continue to survive (and, in a few cases, flourish) have somehow adapted to the degradation of their habitats. Whether their continued existence is due to mutation, adaptation, or luck is something that many xenobiologists continue to debate.

MANTELLIAN PTEROSAUR [RIVAL]

Mantellian pterosaurs are large avian reptiles distantly related to Mantellian Savrips. Though far less intelligent than their terrestrial cousins, pterosaurs are still cunning and vicious predators. They roost in highland areas and mountains, and often fly hundreds of kilometers in order to hunt for prey.

Mantellian pterosaurs have the look of massive, grey bats with long, tapered skulls, snakelike heads, and wide maws filled with sharp teeth. Their wingspans can measure up to five meters in width, and even larger specimens are rumored to live in Ord Mantell's deep wilds. The primary tactic of pterosaurs when hunting is to grab their prey with their talons, drop them from an especially high altitude, and then descend to feast on the remains.

4

BRAWN

4

AGILITY

1

INTELLECT

3

CUNNING

2

WILLPOWER

1

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

4

W. THRESHOLD

16


M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Coordination 4, Perception 3, Survival 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Flyer (Mantellian pterosaurs can fly as per page 202 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook), Keen Eyesight (add  to any Perception checks involving vision), Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Teeth (Brawl; Damage 4; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Sunder, Vicious 2), claws (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]).

MANTELLIAN FLUTTERPLUME [MINION]

Despite their florid name, flutterplumes are one of Ord Mantell's most dangerous scavengers. Preferring to hunt wastes and Scraplands from on high, these creatures can often be seen gliding on thermal currents in the distance in flocks of three or four. Their eyesight is quite acute, and they are always hungry.

Flutterplumes have four legs, each terminating in a set of sharp, hooked talons. Their faces and necks lack feathers, while the rest of their bodies and wings are covered in colorful feathers.

1	3	1	4	1	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 2		W. THRESHOLD 3		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills (group only): Brawl, Coordination, Survival.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Flyer (Mantellian flutterplumes can fly, as described on page 202 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook).

Equipment: Beak and talons (Brawl; Damage 2; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]).

MANTELLIAN SAVRIP [RIVAL]

Though Ord Mantell is home to millions of unique species, the most notable of them is the Savrip. Though Savrips have long been considered semi-sentient by xenobiologists from the Core Worlds, their perceived intellect remains a contentious subject. To the people of Ord Mantell, however, there is no doubt that Savrips are cunning, intelligent, and—most of all—dangerous.

Nearly four meters tall when standing fully erect, Savrips move in a hunched posture that disguises their height while exaggerating their already prodigious bulk. Their necks are long and topped by snake-like heads, and their muscular arms drag upon the ground. Though primitive, Savrips prefer to wear clothing, and many wield large clubs as weapons.

5	2	1	3	2	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 5		W. THRESHOLD 24		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Discipline 2, Melee 2, Perception 2, Resilience 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Poisonous Bite (anyone bitten by a Savrip must succeed at an **Average [◆◆] Resilience check** or lose his free maneuver for five rounds), Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Large club (Melee; Damage 8; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3).



WORLPORT

As the capital of Ord Mantell, Worlport stands as a symbol of the planet's independence from the rest of the galaxy. Its various industries—most notably gambling—define the world, attracting billions of visitors every standard year. Whether they come for games of chance, to satisfy their craven appetites with illicit pleasures, or to earn their fortunes in an illegal endeavor, Worlport's visitors always expect to be entertained.

Much of Worlport's sprawl is constructed with round domes, elaborate facades, and carved obelisks placed seemingly at random throughout the city. Closer to the Path of Coins and Government House, the architecture is older and more authentically Corellian. Rotundas fronted by colonnades and lintels featuring carved entablatures are common, and tall, ornate spires rise defiantly into the smoggy atmosphere that drifts slowly over the city.

While the rest of Ord Mantell is sparsely settled and rural, Worlport provides a (relatively) safe alternative to the galaxy's shadier locales. Though there is no central military or security force in place, every business in the city has its own private security to maintain some semblance of order and to keep its customers safe. The scofflaws and criminals—of whom there are many—know better than to stir up trouble within the city's walls.

This is not to say that Worlport is safe—far from it. The city still features all manner of petty crime, livened up by the occasional murder or two. This only adds to the sense of danger that many tourists come to Ord Mantell to experience. Even hardened criminals appreciate the implicit hazards of the place, which make it more than a tourist attraction with delusions of grandeur.

HISTORY

Worlport began as a humble trading post in Ord Mantell's distant past, providing basic amenities to traders, Republic agents, and big game hunters. Over time, its coastal location and abundant water supply made it particularly valuable. The arrival of countless Mantellian settlers caused it to flourish into one of Ord Mantell's most profitable and populous towns.

During the later years of the Republic, Worlport was much seedier. Dark cantinas nestled amid open-air marketplaces comprised most of the settlement's industry. Republic troops on shore leave would come to entertain themselves, providing the city's criminal elements with a wide variety of customers and victims.

When Republic forces withdrew from Ord Mantell, Worlport grew at an alarming rate. The last semblance of law and authority was gone, and the Corellian spirit of freedom and enterprise grew strong. Despite (or because of) this, the planetary governorship established by the Republic finally rose up from the anarchy to keep things somewhat civilized. This veneer of decorum, however, could never completely disguise the city's corruption.

When the Republic's interest in Ord Mantell was rekindled by its prosperity, the governorship recognized the potential profits in acknowledging its relationship with the Galactic Senate. Despite these public assurances of cooperation with the Republic, however, Worlport remains a near-lawless enclave where anything can be bought or sold.

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Worlport's citizens come from all species, backgrounds, and demographics. Given Worlport's cosmopolitan bent and numerous offworlders, traders, and criminals from every corner of the galaxy, its people are welcoming and willing to do business with just about anyone. This appreciation for business partners doesn't equal blind trust, however. Mantellians are as likely to swindle an individual who doesn't earn their respect as they are to trade with a respected one.

URBAN GEOGRAPHY

Ord Mantell's capital city encompasses a large number of interconnected neighborhoods and districts. Countless communities have sprung up and evolved over the millennia, and none of the planet's original settlers would recognize the city now. Worlport was haphazardly planned, despite the orderly architecture, which is undoubtedly Corellian in style. The layout of its streets and avenues is particularly chaotic. This tumult, coupled with the fact that buildings are rarely numbered or marked, makes getting lost as easy as tripping over a gambler in the city's casinos.

Worlport spreads out from Morro Spaceport like an oblong wheel. Most offworld visitors are wise enough to remain in the city's safe areas, particularly those near the spaceport and along the exciting Path of Coins. Though there is no central law enforcement agency, individual security firms are paid to keep the peace in much of Worlport. The city's walls, originally erected many centuries ago to deter Mantellian Savrips, have fallen into disrepair as the Savrip population has dwindled.

Listed here are the major districts and neighborhoods that make up much of Worlport. District borders outside the more affluent and secure areas of the city fluctuate all the time. Visitors unfamiliar with the city's layout should be cautious when venturing into high-risk areas.

THE BREAKWATER

The southern edge of Worlport, known as "the Breakwater," is a long stretch of quays, warehouses, and lower-class neighborhoods overlooking the murky waters of Worlport Bay. Maritime industry dominates, and merchant marines rub elbows with fisherfolk and scavengers in its winding, salt-crustured alleyways.

Though seaborne vehicles are used primarily for recreation, a small amount of mercantile traffic also plies Ord Mantell's oceans. Piracy, too, has grown in response to increasing ocean traffic, though the waters of the bay are rarely targeted by such brigands.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Ord Mantell's central government, such as it is, is housed in this opulent, palatial building. Designed with classic Corellian motifs of rising spires and domed roofs, it stands as a symbol of order in an otherwise chaotic environment. The governor and his family live within, as do visiting dignitaries from other planetary systems. Moreso than anywhere else on the planet, the capitol's security is incredibly tight.

Individuals with official business are more likely to visit the administrative offices in Government Circle, the area surrounding the capitol. Courts and other offices are there, as is the Red House, Worlport's official prison facility. Despite a façade of civility and bureaucracy, money is still the ultimate arbiter on Ord Mantell. Only the naïve and desperate hope the ruling party will act on their behalf without compensation.

HERGLIC'S FOLLY

Of Worlport's three gambling districts, Herglic's Folly is the most dangerous. What little security the district boasts is spotty and unreliable; brawls, duels, and firefights erupt there nearly every day. Most of the gamblers and thugs who dwell in the shadows of the Folly's alleyways are desperate and willing to do anything in order to make a score.

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

The Industrial District is the stretch just south of the meandering slums that separate Worlport from the Scraplands to the north. The district's wide streets are busy at all hours of the day, and the air is filled with the smells of acrid smoke, harsh chemicals, and the sweat of toiling laborers. The effluvium sits heavily among the stained buildings before rising up and drifting toward the slums and Scraplands.

Much of the city's non-gambling commerce and jobs originate in the Industrial District. Working with little oversight from Ord Mantell's government, the various businesses and manufactories of the Industrial District produce droids, weapons, pharmaceuticals, and grey-market technology, much of which is exported offworld.

THE JEWEL DISTRICT

The most affluent neighborhood of Worlport, the Jewel District is heavily-patrolled by private security. Here, the wealthiest Mantellians and offworld landholders own mansions, palaces, and posh retreats among the wide, cobblestone avenues. Unlike the rest of the city, the Jewel District was meticulously planned, allowing for space between individual estates. A handful of these estates, dating from Ord Mantell's earliest days, feature subterranean chambers and complexes seen by only the most privileged eyes.

The Jewel District is accessible by permit or invitation only. The security firms that patrol its streets and guard its walls are paid well to keep the rabble out, and they have few qualms about employing deadly force in order to do so.

KILLAIRN'S BAZAAR

Killairn's Bazaar is a large mercantile district that spills over into neighboring areas during busy market days. Nearly anything can be bought or sold here, from weapons to slaves to any variety of spice. Legality is never an issue, though some kinds of merchants garner more respect than others. Slavers and their customers, for example, are often looked down upon by other businesspeople and are referred to as "bottom feeders" by just about everyone else.



The merchants who ply their wares here rarely advertise. This requires most customers to know in advance what they're looking for and whom they can buy it from. Guides, known colloquially as "vetters," can be hired to direct clients to where they want to go in exchange for a percentage of the merchant's profits on ensuing purchases. Vetters claim to be honor-bound to serve the interests of their clients, though most of them are paid by unscrupulous merchants who are more interested in fleecing their customers.

MORRO SPACEPORT

Morro Spaceport, the central feature of Ord Mantell's capital, is named after one of the planet's original Corellian colonists. Encompassing Worlport's central "hub," the spaceport also services other private docking facilities throughout the city. Scores of vessels take off and land each day, making Morro one of the busiest spaceports in Bright Jewel sector.

Pilots must subcontract with one or more security firms to secure their own vessels. Captains without their own security who fail to foot the bill risk both vandalism and theft. Standard docking fees, which are actually quite reasonable, are collected separately by the spaceport authority.

THE PATH OF COINS

The largest and most public of Worlport's gambling districts is the Path of Coins. It stretches uninterrupted from Morro Spaceport's central gate all the way to Government Circle. The casinos and gambling halls, which grow more opulent the closer one gets to Government House, include such well-known establishments as the Lady Fate Casino and Mugwaar's Palace.

The Path of Coins bustles with activity at all hours of the day and night. Celebrations spill out unpredictably from casinos onto the district's wide and bustling streets, and impromptu parades and processions are commonplace. This perpetual celebration is rarely interrupted, and both natives and visitors alike flock to it like moths to a golden flame.

SLUMS (VARIOUS)

The outskirts of Worlport, especially those on the northern and eastern edges of the city, comprise mostly slums and lower-class shanties. There is no easy way to distinguish one slum from the next, and colloquial designations for different slum districts can change from day to day. Security is provided by local gangs, which stake out territories and intimidate residents into paying for their "protection."

THE WHITE ZONE

The White Zone is what remains of the original Republic garrison. Though co-opted by the planetary government, the facilities were given over to the Empire as a demonstration of goodwill and noninterference. Since then, the White Zone—so called for the many stormtroopers who patrol its streets—is home to a large Imperial garrison.

Worlport's government views the Empire as a necessary evil that allows Ord Mantell to maintain much of its autonomy. The typical Mantellian, on the other hand, is uncomfortable with the Empire's presence in the city. The Rebel Alliance has had some success in turning this discomfort into outright sedition.

The unfortunate truth is that the Imperial presence is growing. Imperial troops can often be seen patrolling the streets outside the White Zone, and these patrols have only increased in frequency. To make matters worse, stormtroopers have begun to venture further and further from the White Zone as the months wear on.



A BLOODBUG IN THE OINTMENT

Given that the Queen the PCs captured or killed was an impostor, any payment promised by the Zann Consortium fails to appear in their accounts. While they've done an admirable job of interrupting the Sorority's operations on Saleucami, the PCs have yet to fulfill the terms of the contract. Venlana informs the PCs that they are allowed to retain the money already paid to them as long as they continue with their assignment. Additional terms can be negotiated, but it needs to be done in person.

Venlana invites the PCs back to the Paradise for a new briefing. She tells them that additional information has come to light regarding the most recent transmission sent by the Sorority, and that the Zann Consortium is already preparing to commence with phase two of the operation.

RETURN TO PARADISE

The PCs return to the Paradise by whatever means are most convenient. Once there, they encounter the same Aqualish bouncer, and he once again eyes them suspiciously as they enter the cantina. Inside, Porel meets them and leads them back to the same meeting room they were briefed in originally.

Venlana waits for them beyond the metal door, her polite congeniality barely masking an irritability the Player Characters haven't seen before. She doesn't offer the PCs refreshment this time, though she won't refuse or chastise anyone who decides to help themselves. In fact, should one or more PCs pour themselves a drink, she asks them to prepare her one, too.

Once everyone is settled, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

Venlana looks tired, and her pleasant demeanor seems to be forced. She nods to you before beginning her briefing.

"New information has come to light concerning the Sorority's whereabouts. Our technicians have analyzed the Sorority's transmission, and it appears to have originated on the planet of Ord Mantell. A Consortium response team has been activated in Worlport, Ord Mantell's capital, and is awaiting your arrival."

She pauses so the PCs can ask questions or make comments, though she is quick to steer the conversation back on point if they begin to ask questions that aren't relevant to the matter at hand. At an opportune moment, Venlana says:

"I understand you've faced plenty of dangers in service to the Consortium, and your activities will be well rewarded. We will happily double the agreed-upon compensation if you can successfully complete the next phase of the operation."

Venlana lets that sink in for a moment before continuing. "Should you decide to default on this contract, I can guarantee the Consortium—and Tyber Zann in particular—will be quite displeased."

Venlana's veiled threat is far from a bluff. At this point, the Zann Consortium has too much at stake to risk further delays, and its leadership expects the PCs to get the job done despite this unexpected setback. If they wish to live without the Consortium's bounty hunters on their heels, they must accept the offer. They are free to negotiate, however, and any concessions made by Venlana are at the GM's discretion.

Once the PCs agree, Venlana tells them that any docking and resupply fees in Taleucema will be paid for and that they are to leave at once for Ord Mantell. Before wishing them well and thanking them for dealing with the Sorority's base on Saleucami, she informs the PCs that a Consortium associate named Jander will contact them once they've landed in Worlport.

Leaving Saleucami is uneventful, provided the GM doesn't have alternative plans. The PCs are free to take care of any other business before they leave, but an excessive delay results in a stern communication from Venlana telling them to get moving before the Zann Consortium loses faith in them.

ARRIVAL IN WORLPORT

Assuming the Game Master doesn't intend to liven things up for the PCs mid-journey, the trip to Ord Mantell is also uneventful. Getting clearance to land is a simple matter, though ground control strongly suggests the PCs hire someone to secure their ship on the ground if they have no other alternative. They are directed to docking bay 11, at the eastern edge of Morro Spaceport.

Air traffic over the spaceport is sparse, especially given Worlport's reputation as Ord Mantell's economic nucleus. Traffic consists of light freighters and pleasure ships. The PCs see no hint of fighter cover or anti-starship artillery of any kind, and communicator traffic is informal and direct.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs' ship comes in for a landing:

Ord Mantell stretches out below you. A vast sea, blue-black in the sun, spreads south of an expansive continent whose southern reaches are shrouded in smog. To the north, much of the wilderness looks inhospitable. As you circle into a landing pattern, the smog gives way and reveals a sprawling city festooned with lights. Worlport, famous for its casinos and lawlessness, awaits you!

Within a few minutes of landing, the ship's communications console chimes, indicating an incoming call. When the PCs answer, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The communicator screen flickers to life, revealing a large blue nose flanked by a pair of bulbous yellow eyes. "About bloody time," a voice growls. "When Vee said she was sendin' a group of professionals, I expected they'd be on time."

This is Jander, the PCs' Toydarian Consortium contact on Ord Mantell. His demeanor is one of constant irritation and impatience, but this is an act he uses to keep his underlings in line. He pushes the PCs around if they let him, but once they show any resistance—violent, verbal, or otherwise—Jander becomes much more accommodating.

Once the pleasantries are out of the way, Jander gives the PCs what they need: information on where to proceed next. *"It wasn't cheap, but I got a meetin' set up between you guys and Illo Vandin. He's a big-shot gambler who knows things, and I think he'll help you guys out if you scratch his back."* Jander provides them with the address for Vandin's estate in the Jewel District—the city's richest neighborhood. *"It's locked down tighter than a worrt's backside, but I'll have someone waitin' for you at the gates with a pass."*

Jander then excuses himself, claiming to have "other business" that he needs to see to. He does tell the PCs to contact him if they need anything else, but he warns that if they cause too much trouble, he'll deny all knowledge of their existence.

Given his reputation, it's likely that one or more of the Player Characters knows something about Illo Vandin. Upon hearing his name, any PC can attempt a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld) check**. If this check succeeds, the PC in question has heard about Vandin and knows the following information:

- ☆: Illo Vandin is a Herglic, and a big name on the gambling circuit. He's a near-legendary gambler who rose above his humble beginnings, and is now incredibly wealthy.

- ☹: Vandin financially backs promising gamblers on occasion, acting as both mentor and manager for them.
- ☹☹: Illo Vandin runs a number of small casinos, both in Worlport and in some of Ord Mantell's lesser-known shadowports.
- ⚙: Unknown to most people, Illo Vandin has masterminded a number of lucrative rackets, loan operations, and smuggling rings in Worlport. Though he has no visible role in their day-to-day operations, he calls all the shots and benefits greatly from of their profits.

DOCKING BAY INSECURITY

When the Player Characters disembark from their vessel, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

As you emerge from your ship, you immediately notice that Worlport's atmosphere smells strongly of pollution and fossil fuels. The docking bay is sparse and empty, its concrete surfaces stained by years of lubricant and fuel leaks. The sounds of the spaceport—whining engines, clamoring tools, and blaring loudspeakers—fill your ears.

Movement at the docking bay's entrance catches your eye. A lanky droid with a drab camouflage paint scheme approaches you slowly, a carbine slung over its shoulder. Once within speaking distance, it stops and looks at you with a pair of yellow, glowing eyes. "Offer: security. Fee: reasonable. Vessel safety: guaranteed."

This is JR-12, an independent security contractor. It has come to offer its security services to the PCs. The droid's "reasonable" fee is 80 credits per day, though it is willing to barter for weapons or other supplies as long as they meet its inorganic needs. It doesn't act in a hostile or threatening fashion. Instead, its demeanor is direct and matter-of-fact.

Should the PCs refuse JR-12's offer of security, it replies, *"Response: noted. Possibility of vessel damage increased by thirty-five percent. Have a nice day,"* before stalking off. This isn't a threat on JR's part, merely a calculated observation. The droid has no intention of returning to damage the vessel, but it's seen enough unprotected ships damaged to know what is likely to happen. At the GM's discretion, other options can be made available if the PCs wish to pursue them. Less reputable security contractors might roam the port, for example, looking for work or attempting overt extortion from starfarers.

If the PCs decide to leave their ship unguarded, the risk of its being tampered with is high. Ultimately, the results of their decision are up to the GM, who should take into account the party's approach and budget. Criminal acts could range from petty vandalism to outright ship theft. Damages inflicted, if any, should require at least 500 credits to repair.

JR-12, INDEPENDENT SECURITY CONTRACTOR [RIVAL]

JR-12 is an old security droid who lost its master at least fifty years ago. Since then, it has worked as a bounty hunter, bodyguard, bouncer, and security guard—sometimes all four at once—and has become recognized throughout Morro Spaceport as one of the more reliable security contractors available.

Like that of all security droids in this series, JR-12's humanoid frame is tall and gangly, and its metallic skin is coated in a scratched-up camouflage paint job. Though blunt, it is honest to a fault and hardworking.

QUID PRO QUO

Locating the Jewel District isn't difficult, especially if the PCs get a taxi to take them there. Walking from the spaceport would take too long, and riding in their own vehicle causes numerous delays, unless they are already intimately familiar with Worlport's neighborhoods and geography. When they arrive at the district's main gate, they find a shimmering particle shield flanked by high walls and staffed by stern-looking guards in yellow laminate armor.

Though citizens come and go, the traffic in this area isn't particularly heavy; the PCs don't need to make a check to spot Jander's man. He's a nondescript human in coveralls. Any PC who succeeds on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check**, though, notices that he is wearing a concealed blaster beneath his coveralls. He offers the PC a crumpled envelope with a nod, and says, "from Jander." As soon as the PCs accept it, he turns and walks away from the Jewel District gate.

Within the envelope is a security pass marked with the date and Illo Vandin's address. A number of warnings are also listed, describing rules that must be observed while in the Jewel District, any violation of which results in expulsion or arrest. The most important of these rules relate to the possession of weapons, though the pass from Vandin specifies that the PCs are permitted to retain all weapons and equipment as long as they are not restricted items.

3	3	2	2	2	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 5		W. THRESHOLD 16		M/R DEFENSE 1 1	

Skills: Cool 3, Discipline 3, Mechanics 2, Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Ranged (Heavy) 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Natural Hunter (may re-roll any one Perception or Vigilance check).

Abilities: Droid (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink and can survive in vacuum or underwater. Immune to poisons or toxins).

Equipment: Blaster carbine (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting) with forearm grip (decreases additional difficulty of making Ranged [Heavy] checks when engaged to ◆), integrated armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak), utility belt.

With the pass in hand, the PCs are permitted to enter the Jewel District. Despite the pass, each Player Character is given a rudimentary pat-down, and the guards warn them that their pass is only valid for six hours from their time of entry. Though one of the guards eyes them warily from his post, they are allowed to proceed with little fanfare.

Though the gate guards allowed them inside the district, the PCs can still expect to be confronted by district security patrols, especially if they possess visible weaponry. If, for some reason, they don't have their pass, they are detained, secured, and searched while their story is investigated. District security is very willing to shoot anyone who gets out of line.

JEWEL DISTRICT SECURITY GUARD

With their highly distinctive yellow laminate armor, it's impossible to mistake the Jewel District's guards for anything else. Each four-person squad is trained to detect and repel intruders, and does so rapidly and with extreme prejudice. Three members of each squad are equipped with standard blaster rifles, while the fourth carries a heavy blaster rifle. If statistics are needed, use the Spaceport Security Officer profile on page 398 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

Compared to the rest of Worlport, the Jewel District is clean and well maintained. Though the smog of the city still clings to its elaborate spires and massive cupolas, the streets of the district are free from congestion, and there is no filth or graffiti. Most of the activity is confined to foot traffic: messengers, servants, and droids going to and fro. Some of them give the PCs curious glances, but none seem overly interested or alarmed about them unless they're doing something that's against the rules.

Vandin's estate is nearly half a kilometer from the district gate. As long as they conduct themselves well and produce their pass for any patrols that demand it, the PCs should have little trouble reaching it. The grounds are sown with tall trees and verdant hedges that shield the villa from the street. White stone columns carved in marine shapes, connected by black iron fences, secure the property. Two guards in black coats with heavy blaster pistols on their hips in quick-draw holders wait for the PCs by the estate's gate.

The guards politely ask the PCs for their security pass before allowing them to enter the grounds. Once the gate is locked behind them, one of the guards leads the PCs to Vandin's villa. The villa is modestly sized, compared to some of the other residences the PCs have seen in the Jewel District.

Dim, blue light illuminates the interior of the villa, which is comfortably cool. Exotic fish swim languidly in aquariums built into the walls, and the air is heavy with the unmistakable scent of the sea. The villa's guards take the PCs into a small, yet well-appointed, office. "*Master Vandin will be with you shortly,*" they say before departing, closing the door behind them.

Though the office is filled with fine bric-a-brac, nothing stands out as being especially valuable. Like the rest of the house, the walls are constructed of aquariums filled with marine life, though many of the species in these tanks appear to be carnivorous in nature. The paintings and holoprints on display in the room depict ocean and sea scenes from around the galaxy.

After an appropriate interval, the door opens and Vandin enters the room with one of his black-clad guards. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The wide, round office door opens, admitting an incredibly bulky humanoid dressed in a fine blue suit and matching short black cape. His skin is smooth, hairless, and dark grey. His wide grey-green eyes take you in at a glance, and his broad mouth widens in a toothy smile. "And here we have some of Tyber's associates, do we?" he asks in an astonishingly deep voice, though it's obvious he already knows the answer. "Let's get down to business, yes?"

Illo already knows who the PCs are, who they work for, and what they're interested in finding out. Most of this information was passed onto him by Jander, while the rest he's been able to deduce on his own. Nevertheless, he allows the PCs to explain themselves and their goals, listening intently. Allow the conversation to continue for a few minutes before having Illo explain his offer.

"You want the Queen, do you?" Illo asks. "I can tell you how to find her, but I'd like a favor first, a task you can do for me. It shouldn't take you long, and I don't expect you'll find it difficult to accomplish, either."

When the PCs ask about the favor, Illo provides additional details. "*There are two things I need done, but you only need to take care of one of them,*" he says. "*The first involves fixing a fight here in Worlport, while the second relies on your delivering a package to a work camp in the Scraplands. Which one tickles your fancy?*"



WHAT'S IN IT FOR ILLO VANDIN?

Outside of having a task accomplished at bargain basement prices, this deal is more important to Illo Vandin than he lets on. Insofar as the fight is concerned, the fighter known as "Flutterplume" is highly favored by the Pirate Queen. Because Illo and the Queen are constantly in a state of unspoken competition when wagering in local bouts, Illo hopes that Flutterplume's defeat (or disqualification) will result in a loss of prestige for the Queen.

Should the PCs choose the delivery job, Illo is still satisfied. The package is being billed as goods acquired from the Veiled Sorority and intended for one of his salvage operations. The product—a potent kind of spice known as "tyrru"—is laced with an insidiously slow-acting poison. Once the workers at Rusty Reach begin to die prematurely, Illo will gain the perfect excuse to cut ties with the Sorority, damaging the Queen's reputation.

Illo's primary motive is more devious and subtle. The information he plans to offer the Player Characters involves the Pirate Queen's current paramour, Micael Torval, a very talented sabacc player. Illo would prefer to have Torval on his own payroll, but the fellow is devoted to the Queen. If Illo can ensure that Torval's loyalty is shaken without a link back to himself, he can bring the gambler into his own ranks. Better still, the Queen's capture or execution by the Zann Consortium would effectively allow Illo to edge in on the Veiled Sorority's business in Worlport, something he has been desiring for some time. Illo has been waiting for an opportune time to launch this effort, and the PCs can serve his needs quite well while providing him deniability should things go poorly.

Should the Player Characters want the details of both assignments, Illo informs them of the basics (see **Fight Fixing 101**, on page 53, and **Rusty Reach**, on page 59). Once they've made their decision, he describes the task in more detail. If the PCs get cold feet upon hearing additional details of one task, Illo shrugs. *"Do you want the information or not? If you do, you need to earn it, one way or the other."* Regardless, he allows them to change their minds once, but otherwise he gives them no other concessions.

In exchange for their assistance in either case, Illo offers to provide the Player Characters with two pieces of information concerning the Pirate Queen's whereabouts. Illo knows he has the upper hand here, and he refuses any counteroffers or attempts to negotiate on the PCs' part. Unless they can somehow manage to convince him, they'll be forced to take his offer or leave it—there is no middle ground.

ILLO VANDIN, HERGLIC CRIME LORD [NEMESIS]

Illo Vandin is a career gambler who made his fortune on Ord Mantell. Born on the Herglic world of Giju, he emigrated at an early age. He spent most of his formative years plying the Outer Rim's hyperspace lanes as part of a smuggler's crew. When the smuggler's ship was repossessed by an angry crime lord, Illo found himself on Ord Mantell.

Like most Herglics, Illo is tall and broad, with deep grey skin. He dresses in well-made clothing that mimics fashions popular with Worlport's gamblers, and he always wears a short cape made of black shimmersilk. He projects a calm and friendly demeanor to guests and friends, but behind this mask he is a cold, calculating, and suspicious businessman.

When speaking, Illo tends to ask rhetorical questions of those around him, and is amused when individuals insist on answering them.

5	2	3	4	4	3
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
6	20	16	0	0	

Skills: Brawl 2, Charm 4, Cool 4, Deception 4, Knowledge (Underworld) 4, Negotiation 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Streetwise 4.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Nobody's Fool 2 (upgrade difficulty of all Charm, Coercion, and Deception checks targeting Illo twice).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), comlink, fine clothing.

FIGHT FIXING 101

If the Player Characters decide that helping Illo fix a fight is more to their liking, he nods his large head and gives a broad grin before explaining: *"I love betting on the fights, I do. If you've put a few thousand credits on the victor, it's that much sweeter. But sometimes, I like to ensure that my bet's going to count—especially when I'm rooting for the underdog. And that's where you come in..."*

A fighter named "Flutterplume" is a favored contestant in an upcoming sequence of bouts in Worlport. Illo's representatives have approached Flutterplume on three occasions and offered her a small fortune to take a fall in the final match.

Unfortunately, she has refused every one of these offers. Illo wants the PCs to confront her and ensure that she's incapable of participating. He prefers that she be crippled rather than killed, but either outcome suits his needs as long as it cannot be traced back to him. If they can somehow convince her to drop out nonviolently, so much the better.

Once the Player Characters accept Illo Vandin's offer, he provides them with information about Flutterplume. He reminds them that the job is time sensitive, as the event begins within the next couple days. The sooner the PCs can knock Flutterplume out of the running, the sooner he reveals the information he's promised them.

ABOUT FLUTTERPLUME

Flutterplume is a rising Worlport fighter who hasn't yet made her fortune but is already earning enough for a relatively comfortable existence. Regardless of how the PCs arrange to encounter her, the meeting is likely to result in a fight. She's an experienced combatant—one of the best on the circuit—and she'd rather fight and die than acquiesce to anyone's demands. She's much more capable with her bare hands and feet than she is with weapons, and (if possible) uses her vibroknucklers to their best effect against anyone stupid enough to become engaged with her.

Though her stage name is well known and widely spoken of in Worlport, her true identity is more mysterious. Given his many contacts, Illo Vandin knows her bout schedule. If asked, he can clue the PCs in to the fact that she's fighting at the Loaded Savrip casino on the Path of Coins that night. PCs can also dig this information up on their own by checking the city's information network, which requires an **Easy (◆) Computers** or **Streetwise** check.

In addition, a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers** check or a **Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld)** check reveals the following information about the fighter called Flutterplume:

- ☆: Flutterplume's real name is Aimee Kraeff, and she has an apartment in Westwall, a middle-class district. Due to her success, as well as the fact that she fights as many as four times per week, she is able to focus on her fighting skills instead of holding down a day job.
- ☹: Flutterplume is a native of Ord Mantell who was born in the farming village of Redlake on the border of the Scraplands.
- ☹ ☹: Flutterplume left her village at an early age and was nearly killed by wild Savrips in the Scraplands. She was fortunately saved by Scraplands nomads who brought her to Worlport, where she's been ever since.
- ☹ ☹ ☹: Unknown to most people (including Flutterplume), the village of Redlake—where Flutterplume was born—was recently found abandoned. Signs indicate that the entire population was taken by slavers.
- ☠: The people of Redlake have been sold to a Scraplands salvage operation in a place known as "Rusty Reach." Given the place's reputation as a death sentence to anyone forced to work there, her family likely won't last more than a month.

HELPING FLUTTERPLUME'S PARENTS

Particularly conscientious PCs might offer to help Flutterplume rescue her parents in exchange for her promise not to fight in the upcoming match. Much of the information required to run this side mission can be found under the **Rusty Reach** heading, on page 59. With a little improvisation, the PCs can accomplish their goal more honorably.

MAKING CONTACT

PCs have the following obvious options for fulfilling their deal with Vandin. They are also likely to come up with ideas of their own, so the GM should be prepared for just about anything. Flutterplume's adversary profile can be found on page 58.

Ambush: Flutterplume walks to and from her scheduled bouts—assuming she isn't in too much pain to do so under her own power. Following her to or from one of her fights without being seen requires one or more **opposed Stealth checks** versus her **Perception** skill. Given the relative lawlessness of Worlport's streets, the PCs can keep her occupied for two or three turns before anyone might care to come to her defense.

If Flutterplume notices that she's being followed, she wastes no time in confronting the offending individual. *"Did that whale send you?"* she demands, raising a scarred fist adorned with a humming vibroknuckler. She may be angry enough to launch an attack by herself, which may catch the PCs off guard, given that she's supposed to be the prey.

Injuring the young woman is easy once she's been overwhelmed, but it takes a special kind of scum to do that to a defenseless person. Of course, this is Ord Mantell, and not every Player Character is going to possess a heart of gold. Injuring her might accomplish their goal, but the GM shouldn't let the PCs get away with feeling good about themselves if they do. In fact, there are a number of fight fans who expected Flutterplume to win in the upcoming bout, and they'd be mighty displeased if they found out who was behind her mutilation or death.

Extortion: Flutterplume is tough, but she's got a few weak spots in her armor that Player Characters can exploit. If the PCs are aware that Flutterplume's native village of Redlake was recently attacked by slavers, she's extremely distraught by the revelation. Even if they have no knowledge of the attack, the PCs can still imply that Flutterplume's parents are in danger as long as she chooses to fight to win in the upcoming event.

Any attempt to sway Flutterplume with words requires the PCs to succeed at a **Hard (6 6 6) Coercion check** or a **Hard (6 6 6) Deception check**. Using her parents as bargaining chips in such threats or deception grants the PCs one or more **■**, depending on the veracity of their argument. If they provide outright proof that Redlake has been attacked—local militia scouting reports, underground news outlets, or the like—the PCs can upgrade the ability of their check once.

If convinced that her parents are in danger, Flutterplume does one of two things. If the insinuation is that the Player Characters control her parents' safety and plan to harm them if she doesn't throw the upcoming fight against Vandin's favorite, she drops out of the running entirely. If, on the other hand, the PCs convince her that Redlake has been attacked, she chooses to leave town immediately to investigate the incident on her own.



Should the Player Characters' Coercion or Deception checks fail, Flutterplume flies into a rage and lashes out at them with her fists, feet, and vibroknucklers, retreating only in the face of superior firepower or if she is seriously injured. Unless her wounds are severe enough to keep her from fighting, she won't consider dropping out of the running just because some thugs tried to rough her up.

Fight: Player Characters who consider themselves brawlers may be interested in facing Flutterplume in the ring and disabling her there. They might intervene in the upcoming bouts or attempt to challenge her that very evening at the Loaded Savrip. In either case, proceed to **The Loaded Savrip** below.

Kidnapping: PCs who aren't willing to harm Flutterplume may be willing to kidnap her and keep her on proverbial ice for a few days. This may be a plan unto itself, or it might be pursued once one of the other plans has already failed. Whatever the case, keeping Flutterplume locked up, whether in a cheap flophouse or within their own spaceship, requires the PCs to walk a very careful line.

While kidnapping someone is nefarious, Flutterplume's temporary imprisonment might still save the consciences of PCs who don't want to take a bloodier path. As long as the PCs treat Flutterplume humanely and keep her out of the limelight until her matches have concluded, their mission is a success. Flutterplume, on the other hand, never forgives. Unless they keep her blindfolded, she's going to do her best to escape and exact revenge.

THE LOADED SAVRIP

Finding the Loaded Savrip is as easy as taking a meandering stroll down Worlport's famous Path of Coins. Speeder traffic is prohibited, so the PCs must walk most of the way to the casino. As they near their destination, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The Path of Coins—the most famous avenue in Worlport—is clogged with revelers, most of them tourists. Vendors loudly hawk their wares—good-luck charms, souvenirs, and food—from brightly lit, multicolored stalls as offworlders mill about, laughing, smoking, and drinking. As a parade of Twi'lek dancers prances by, singing a melodic advertisement for one of the city's many casinos, you spot a colorful holographic Savrip above a casino entrance. The Savrip's stylish trousers are overflowing with credits that spill into a golden pile at its feet, and the word "LOADED" flashes brazenly above its head.

The Loaded Savrip is a middle-class gambling house situated about halfway up the Path of Coins. It provides tourists and visitors with tables and games, most of which are weighted heavily in the house's favor. Most locals are wise enough not to enter the casino's game room unless they are employed there.

Fortunately, there is a seedier, more authentically Mantellian side to the Loaded Savrip—a rough arena behind and beneath the casino proper. Asking the right questions (or knowing the right people) can get nearly anyone access to the Loaded Savrip's arena, but the cost of entry—even for those not interested in placing a wager—is 100 credits per person.

Walking into the Loaded Savrip from the street, the PCs discover a vast, crowded, and noisy gambling hall filled with tourists. The air is smoky, thick with the scents of cigarras, alcohol, and the exotic aromas of spice. A harried Rodian concierge in a rumpled green uniform nods to the PCs, bowing slightly if they approach him. *"Welcome to the Loaded Savrip, friends,"* he says. *"What's your pleasure?"*

If the PCs inquire about the fight that evening, the Rodian drops all pretense of obsequiousness, as he would for any local. He motions for them to follow him and moves at a brisk pace toward the back of the casino until he arrives at a tall, narrow panel in a wall. The Rodian places a green hand upon the panel, causing it to slide aside. *"Enjoy the festivities,"* he says, and then closes the panel behind the PCs.

The panel disguises a short corridor that leads to a number of small turbolifts that convey the PCs a short way down into the arena. The lift doors open, and the sounds of cheering and shouting nearly overwhelm them. Outside the lift, a tall, thin man in a green suit eyes the PCs suspiciously and demands their admission fees: 100 credits per person, no discounts. He then points out the various rings—there are three—and advises the PCs where they can place their bets.

Each ring is built as a miniature amphitheater, with a sunken central killing floor surrounded by circular rows of seats. Each killing floor appears to be identical, and each one is stained with several years' worth of dried blood and gore. A pair of announcers, speaking in accented Huttese, bounce commentary between the active bouts seemingly at random.

If the PCs ask whether they can get in the ring to fight, the tall man looks them over critically. If a proposed fighter appears to be capable, he nods. Otherwise, he scowls and lets out a curse. Regardless of his true thoughts on the PCs' qualifications, he directs them to speak with Jyd Renyr, the arena manager.

JYD RENYR, ARENA MANAGER [RIVAL]

Jyd is an exceedingly portly human with a bald head and beady eyes. He dresses in a fine suit tailored for his excessive physique, and he wanders the arena's edges with surprising speed and agility.

Above all things, Jyd is concerned with profits. He doesn't care who fights (or dies) as long as they pay the requisite charges, as well as any additional fees he decides to tack on for his trouble. Despite this lack of compassion, he's of the opinion that anyone who wants to fight Flutterplume is either stupid or crazy.



Skills: Charm 2, Coercion 3, Deception 2, Discipline 2, Leadership 1, Negotiation 2, Streetwise 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Fine suit, comlink, datapad.

PICKING A FIGHT

When the PCs encounter him, Jyd Renyr is strolling around the arenas, barking orders and ensuring the fight schedule is rigidly maintained. When approached by one or more PCs who want to fight, he growls under his breath, *"Schedule's full. Come back next week."* Changing his mind requires the players to succeed on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Charm check** or an **Average (◆◆) Coercion check**. Offering him at least a 100 credit bribe to sweeten the deal gains the PCs a . Either roll automatically succeeds if a bribe of 500 credits (or more) is offered.

Once convinced, Renyr immediately and discreetly pockets any bribe money given to him and nods. *"Standard participation fee is 200 credits,"* he says, extending his hand for more money. If paid or coerced, he'll concede. *"I wanna see what you can do before I give you a high-profile fight. Get down to arena two, 'cause you're fightin' the Anvil in ten minutes. Bare hands. So, what's your stage name?"*

Of the three arenas, number two has the fewest spectators. Curious fans begin to fill the seats, though, coming to see the pick-up match once it is announced over the loudspeaker. The Anvil, a broad-chested human in black leather pants and a red, form-fitting mask, appears when he is announced and leaps down to the killing floor. The PC is announced by his stage name shortly afterward, and the crowd responds with a few halfhearted cheers.

A bored-looking Bith referee emerges from a concealed alcove and approaches the fighters. *"Look here, right?"* he says. *"No weapons! We're not here to kill each other, get me? Give a good show, and if you can't fight fair, at least fight well. Go!"* A buzzer rings, the crowd cheers, and the match begins.

THE ANVIL, ARENA FIGHTER [RIVAL]

The Anvil, otherwise known as "Parsons" to his small group of what pass for friends, has been fighting in the Loaded Savrip's arena for some time. He's what most consider a midrate fighter who might have had a promising career if his luck hadn't been so bad. Now he's a fixture here, occasionally fighting in a bout or two when the audience is bored or edgy.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Coercion 2, Coordination 3, Discipline 2, Melee 2, Resilience 2, Streetwise 1.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Mask, wrestling costume.

A Game Master who wants to really challenge the fighter in the ring can make the Brawl checks opposed instead of regular combat checks, illustrating the full-body wrestling nature of the match compared to trading punches back and forth.

Though the Anvil does his best, he's little more than an undercut thug with delusions of grandeur. Unless he manages to win somehow against the PC he's pitted against, the Anvil takes a fall once he's been reduced to less than half his wound threshold. If the fight is so decisive that the Anvil is knocked out before he can go down voluntarily, the crowd rises and cheers like a pack of howlrunners.

If the PC defeated the Anvil, Renyr finds the PCs after the fight and looks at them with grudging respect as he hands over the winning prize of 1,000 credits. *"I think you got real talent. Since the Anvil won't be fightin' in his next match, how 'bout you take over for him? I'll pay you his standard rate, too."* Anything less than complete agreement on the part of the PCs is met with a string of obscenities and an offer for double the Anvil's standard rate: 2,000 credits.

The opponent, incidentally, is Flutterplume.



LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!

Renyr has one of his lackeys take the PCs into a locker room beneath the arena, where they can take care of any first aid needed. Other fighters are here, either prepping for their own fights or cleaning up afterward. The fight with Flutterplume isn't for another hour, so the PCs have plenty of time to take care of necessities and make bets, should they be so inclined.

Flutterplume arrives fifteen minutes before the bout. She ignores the PCs, preferring to quietly prepare for the fight. She tries to avoid being baited into conversation or verbal sparring, but even she has limits. If the PCs can make her angry, she suffers a ■ on all the checks she makes during the match due to her hot temper getting the better of her.

Just prior to the start of the match, the Bith referee appears and gives everyone a five-minute warning. The chosen PC is instructed on where to enter the arena after being announced. The PC is greeted by a packed audience that vigorously boos—it's obvious that Flutterplume is the favorite here. A few empty bottles are tossed in the ring, shattering on the floor, but none of them seem to be aimed at anyone.

When Flutterplume emerges, the crowd goes wild. She's in her fighting gear, wearing her feathered mask, and her stage presence is palpable. She moves gracefully, eyeing her opponent with an unwavering stare as she paces back and forth. The Bith referee calls the fighters to the center of the ring and gives his typical speech before whispering "good luck" to the PC.

AIMEE "FLUTTERPLUME" KRAEFF, PIT FIGHTER [NEMESIS]

Aimee Kraeff has worked much of her life to rise above her family's poverty. Born to Corellian parents in one of Ord Mantell's farming villages, she ran away from home in her teens and was nearly killed by a Mantellian Savrip. A band of Scraplands nomads found her near death and nursed her back to health before taking her to Worlport. Alone and without prospects, Aimee soon found herself participating in underground blood sports under the alias of Flutterplume. Since then, she's made quite a name for herself.

Aimee intends to return to her family and lift them out of poverty once she's made her fortune as a fighter in Worlport. She sends money to her parents whenever she can, but she's heard nothing from them for several weeks and is growing increasingly worried. Should the Player Characters befriend her or otherwise gain her trust, they can learn of this and possibly work toward a rescue at Rusty Reach (see the **Flutterplume's Family** sidebar, on page 63)

Flutterplume is a muscular young woman in her early twenties with spiked brown hair and grey eyes. Her back is marred by a series of deep scars, souvenirs from the Savrip attack she survived in her youth. When fighting, she does so anonymously, wearing a thin, formfitting mask adorned with shining flutterplume feathers.

Note that she does not use her vibroknucklers when fighting in the arena, as weapons are not allowed in matches. She quite skillfully uses them in two-weapon combat (see page 210 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook) elsewhere, however, especially should she be attacked as part of the PCs' attempts to forcibly keep her from her upcoming bout.

4	3	2	2	2	3
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
5	15	14	0	0	

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Cool 2, Discipline 2, Melee 3, Resilience 3, Streetwise 2, Survival 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Frenzied Attack 2 (suffer 2 strain to upgrade a Brawl or Melee check twice).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Pair of vibroknucklers (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 1, Vicious 1), heavy clothing (+1 soak), feathered mask, colorful wrestling costume.

As the buzzer sounds and the fight starts, Flutterplume moves in for the kill. If she's been angered by one of the Player Characters, she moves recklessly and seems clumsy for her annoyance. She doesn't bother to use the Aim maneuver for her bare-handed attacks. Otherwise, she takes her opponent seriously, using a Guarded Stance maneuver to feint and attempt to learn a little bit about her foe's style before moving in for a decisive blow. She's a tough combatant, but she isn't invincible.

The fight progresses naturally and only ends when just one opponent is left standing. Dirty fighting of any kind is met with boos, while spectacular hits from either opponent are rewarded with cheers. If the PC wins, the crowd cheers halfheartedly, as many of them have lost money betting on Flutterplume. Should Flutterplume emerge the victor, the crowd erupts into a roar as she vacates the arena.

WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

Depending on the skill level of the PC in the ring, there is a definite chance of losing this fight to Flutterplume. No matter what happens, this should be a high point in the game for everyone, even though only one of the PCs fights in the main event. The other PCs should also be participating, perhaps working the crowd to gather more support for their fighter, loudly booing Flutterplume's actions, and placing bets on the match (either for or against their side).

If the PC wins, Flutterplume is out of the running in the upcoming bout, thereby satisfying Vandin. Renyr appears, as if on cue, and pays the PC. Additionally, he says that the PC and the rest of the group have qualified to participate in high-stakes matches taking place in two days. This offer can be refused, or the PCs can attempt to ride the wave of victory as far as it takes them. The Game Master can develop additional fighters using the Anvil or even Flutterplume as the basis for their profiles.

Assuming the PCs decide to participate in the upcoming fights, Vandin is more than willing to remind them that they are expected to take a fall so that his fighter comes out on top. Whatever decision they make is beyond the scope of this adventure, but the GM is encouraged to have fun with it as long as it doesn't detract from the rest of the plot.

Even if the Player Character loses the match against Flutterplume, any serious Critical Injuries against her (a result of 91+ on **Table 6–10: Critical Injury Result**, from page 217 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook), still disqualifies her from the upcoming fights due to her injuries. If she is unhurt by the exchange, however, the PCs still have a number of options open to them—including pursuing the other task that Illo Vandin offered.

RUSTY REACH

The other option—delivering a package to a salvage operation in the Scraplands—is more straightforward than fixing Vandin’s problem with Flutterplume. According to Illo, the PCs simply need to deliver a small package to Rusty Reach’s foreman, an easy task it seems. If the PCs inquire as to the nature of the package, Illo shakes his head and says, *“That’s none of your business, I’m afraid. Try to remember that.”* What the PCs don’t know is that previous deliveries have met with many failures, ranging from Savrip attacks to his own couriers’ running off with the goods, and he badly needs this delivery made.

The package itself is a small parcel, twelve centimeters wide by twenty centimeters long by five centimeters thick. It’s wrapped in a sheet of thick blue plastic and tightly sealed with tamper-resistant security tape. It weighs a little over two kilograms.

Curious Player Characters may attempt to scan the package for details on its contents, but they discover it’s heavily shielded against detection equipment of any kind. Breaking the security tape is unwise and would permanently indicate that the package has been tampered with.

Rusty Reach is well within the Scraplands, nearly forty kilometers north-northeast of Worlport. The Player Characters need to arrange their own transportation, whether that means they rent or steal a speeder, or simply charter a vehicle. Though dangerous, the Scraplands are safer for anyone with a reliable vehicle, as long as they have a working knowledge of the region’s geography. The PCs are much more likely to have the former than the latter, so they may elect to hire a guide for 100 credits. Illo specifically warns them against using their own vehicle, as he wants the delivery to be low profile, but can recommend a guide or maps.

As airspeeders aren’t easily available in Worlport due to the terrestrial nature of the city, one or more landspeeders should suffice (200-credit rental for each). Though guidebooks and maps of the Scraplands are readily available, Mantellian entrepreneurship means they aren’t all strictly factual, and the uncertain, ever-changing landscape means they aren’t always current.



THE PACKAGE'S CONTENTS

Stubborn or reckless Player Characters may decide to open the package, with little thought to the consequences. If they do, they discover a large, tightly packed supply of what appears to be spice. Anyone succeeding on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld) check** or an **Average (◆◆) Medicine check** knows that the spice is known as "tyrru," and it has a very bad reputation on the street.

Tyrru is a highly effective (and addictive) euphoric pain reliever, typically used to keep slaves manageable. It also has a number of unfortunate side effects, and addicts who aren't given their daily dose of tyrru tend to die in painful agony.

Any PC who opens the parcel and succeeds on a subsequent **Hard (◆◆◆) Knowledge (Underworld) check** notices some strange symbols on the package's inner lining that appear to represent lot numbers; ☹️ reveals the specific designs are often related to Zann Consortium shipments. Though the PCs don't know for certain, they may surmise that this package was either acquired from the Zann Consortium originally, or was stolen from the Consortium by the Sorority.

A more reliable method of transportation is the Worlport Rail, a hovertrain line that runs north out of the city. While it can be used for transport at a cost of 40 credits per passenger, the line terminates at the Fifth Wheel settlement, about fifteen kilometers shy of Rusty Reach.

If the PCs decide to drive themselves to Rusty Reach, they must succeed on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Survival or Piloting (Planetary) check** or become lost in the Scraplands. If they have access to a recent, accurate map or guidebook of the region, they receive a 🟦 on this check. Alternatively, if they came into possession of an older or outright fictitious map or guidebook, they suffer one or more 🟩 to the check.

How lost they become depends on the number of 🌀 generated during the check, with a 🌀 result indicating their vehicles break down or they are unlucky enough to be subjected to a dangerous avalanche of scrap and refuse. Any 🌀 results indicate that the PCs have merely gone off the beaten path and can retrace their steps. The GM can use the **To the Rescue?** encounter to have grateful nomads provide directions if the PCs are having too much difficulty in finding Rusty Reach.

TO THE RESCUE?

At some point during the last ten kilometers of the PCs' journey to Rusty Reach, the sound of slugthrower fire reaches their ears. It seems to come from a nearby gorge formed from piles of decaying garbage and jagged metal scrap. If they choose to investigate, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The sound of slugthrower fire grows louder as you come to the top of a rise. Before you is a shallow gully with a massive piece of rusted industrial pipe embedded in its center. Sheltering behind the pipe cowers a small group of humanoids dressed in dirty protective clothing. Two of them, armed with slugthrower rifles, are fending off a pair of Savrips, but they don't seem to be doing a good job of discouraging the ravaging beasts.

The humanoids are part of a nomad clan that has been hounded by two Savrips for the better part of a week. The nomads are all human, though from a distance (medium range), their cobbled-together survival gear completely obscures their species. There are five in all, three adults and two children. The adults are armed with slugthrower pistols, and two of them carry slugthrower rifles as well. A rickety repulscart stacked with scrap and salvaged goods bobs nearby.

The PCs have an opportunity to assuage their consciences and help the nomads, but they can just as easily turn around and leave without drawing the Savrips' attention. Should they decide to avoid the conflict, they should be allowed to do so, but the PCs should be informed that the gunfire stops suddenly a few minutes following their retreat.

For PCs who do wade into the fray, the Savrips (also at medium range) are far too interested in the nomads to immediately notice them. As such, during the first round of combat, the Savrips continue going after the nomads, ignoring the PCs. Additionally, the PCs gain 🟦 to their first attack checks during the encounter. If the Savrips survive the PCs' initial onslaught, they turn their attention to their new attackers, unleash fearsome bellows, and charge the PCs' position.

The footing in the area is loose and treacherous, and is considered difficult terrain. At the defender's option, any characters who generate one or more 🌀 on a combat or skill check loses their footing and fall prone. Likewise, 🌀 may be spent to cause enemies to slip and fall as they attempt to avoid an attack. Though the unexpected appearance of the PCs shocks the nomads, they continue to fire their rifles at the Savrips. They take pains to avoid shooting at the PCs, directing their fire at whichever Savrip appears to be disadvantaged at the moment.

When the fighting ends, assuming the PCs are successful in overcoming the Savrips, one of the nomads—Evun—emerges from behind the large industrial pipe and approaches the PCs with his hands held up in a gesture of peace. His helmet crackles as he thanks them in broken Basic. *“Much thanks for your help,”* he says. *“We taking salvage to Fifth Wheel for trade. Anything we have that you desire is yours. Please, take.”*

If the Player Characters decide to pick through the salvaged goods in the nomads’ repulsortruck, they find a serviceable (but filthy) pair of electrobinoculars without a power cell, two used breath masks requiring filters, and a moderately damaged light repeating blaster lacking a power pack. Evun encourages the PCs to take what they want. When they are done, he bids them farewell before he and his family continue on their way toward Fifth Wheel.

EVUN, ALVA, AND THEEL, SCRAP NOMADS [RIVAL]

The three adult scrap nomads are named Evun, Alva, and Theel. Evun and Alva use homemade slugthrower rifles to hold off the Savrips, while Theel shields the two children. Evun, the dominant nomad, is a male human in his late twenties. Alva, a female human in her early twenties, is his wife, and the two children belong to them. Theel is Alva’s teenaged brother. The three were traveling to Fifth Wheel with a load of scrap to trade for supplies when they were ambushed by the Savrips.

Each of the nomads wears a patched amalgam of environment gear and scavenged survival equipment, making their features impossible to discern.



Skills: Athletics 2, Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Ranged (Heavy) 2, Ranged (Light) 1, Survival 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Slugthrower rifle (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 7; Critical 5; Range [Medium]; Cumbersome 2), slugthrower pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Short]), gaffi stick (Melee; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Disorient 3), adverse environment gear (+ 1 soak), utility belt, various small tools.

FIFTH WHEEL, THE JEWEL OF THE SCRAPLANDS

Fifth Wheel is a small settlement in the Scraplands, nearly twenty-five kilometers north of Worlport. The population consists of ne’er-do-wells, scavengers, and scrap dealers. Aside from the armored rail platform, there’s nothing to recommend it to tourists. A nameless cantina, built from scrap metal and salvaged wood, dominates the center of the settlement. Guides of dubious moral character hire themselves out at the cantina, and any of the merchants in Fifth Wheel’s dusty marketplace gladly sell trinkets and garbage to gullible customers at inflated prices.

WOUNDED MANTELLIAN SAVRIP [RIVAL]

The two Savrips attacking the nomads have been shot several times each by slugthrowers (which is taken into account in their statistics), but given their thick hides and resilience, the effects of the wounds they’ve sustained so far are minimal. The creatures are both ravenous and have been stalking the nomads for several days, looking for a chance to strike.

Needless to say, the two Savrips aren’t interested in surrender. To them, this conflict is a fight to the death.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Discipline 2, Melee 2, Perception 2, Resilience 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Poisonous Bite (anyone bitten by a Savrip must succeed at an **Average [♦♦] Resilience check** or lose his free maneuver for five rounds), Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Large club (Melee; Damage 8; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3).

A HAVEN FOR NONE

Whether or not the PCs decide to aid the scrap nomads against the Savrips, they arrive at Rusty Reach a short while later. Read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

The heaps of rubbish piled to the sides of the crude road begin to recede. The terrain surrounding you appears to have been bulldozed and, in some places, excavated. Ahead of you, the combination of dust and smoke thins for a moment, revealing a walled compound surrounded on all sides by one hundred meters of killing ground. Armed figures keep watch from rusting metal towers, while other guards ceaselessly patrol the makeshift walls. Thick, grey-black smoke rises from the center of the complex.

As the PCs approach, one of the guards spots them, and a siren begins to wail. With half a dozen blaster rifles pointed at them, the PCs come closer to Rusty Reach's gate. At twenty-five meters, a deep voice bellows, "That's as far as you go!" A Houk guard atop the gate peers down at the PCs and their vehicle before spitting. "Whatcha want?" he growls.

Once the PCs mention a delivery from Illo Vandin, the Houk nods. "Right, right," he says. "Hold up a second." A moment later, the siren goes silent, and the front gate opens with a grinding metallic sound. The PCs are allowed to enter the complex, and the guards promptly close the gate behind them.

Scrap sorted into countless piles chokes the interior of the compound: vehicular parts in one pile, scrap metal in another, pipes and assorted wiring in a third. Thin, sickly beings in ragged clothing, seemingly on the brink of death, sort through the piles. Guards stand over them with force pikes, their eyes never wavering from the slaves.

The Houk, a brute named Gerk, appears and moves toward the PCs, kicking a hapless slave aside for no other reason than to be cruel. "We been waitin' on this stuff, chief," he tells one of the PCs. "Let's see the goods." If the PCs refuse to hand the package over without first seeing their reward, the Houk grunts and produces a filthy envelope, which he shakes for effect. For details on the envelope's contents, see **The Reward, As Promised** on page 63.

After the exchange is made, the Houk opens the package and inspects the contents. If the parcel has been tampered with, he glares at the PCs and complains, "What's this? The seal's broken! Took a taste for yourselves, did ya? Vandin's gonna hear about this!" Otherwise, he gives a satisfied snort and sends the PCs on their way.

Whether or not the PCs have offended Gerk's sensibilities, the guards allow them to leave. Unless the PCs refuse to leave Rusty Reach for some reason, the trip back is quiet and uneventful. The GM is free to have Gerk's threat to alert Vandin be an empty one, or to introduce greater tension when the PCs return to meet with the crime lord. Vandin, though, cares less about Rusty Reach than he does muscling into the Sorority's operations.

GERK, HOUK SUPERVISOR [RIVAL]

Gerk is the biggest and strongest of the slavers, so naturally, he's in charge. It's his responsibility to negotiate with scrap buyers and to replenish the workforce when too many slaves die. While intelligent for a Houk, Gerk often lets his cruelty get the better of him.



Skills: Brawl 3, Coercion 3, Ranged (Light) 3, Resilience 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), brass knuckles (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3), armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak), breath mask.

SLAVER GUARD [MINION]

The slaver guards in Rusty Reach have been selected from some of the vilest scum on Ord Mantell. As long as they're being paid, they obey any order Gerk gives them, no matter how demeaning or malicious it is. The guards come from various species and genders, and there is no specific symbol or uniform to unite them.



Skills (group only): Coercion, Melee, Ranged (Heavy).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster rifle (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Stun setting), stun grenade (Ranged [Light]; Damage 8; Critical —; Range [Short]; Disorient 3, Stun Damage, Blast 8, Limited Ammo 1), force pike (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Stun setting), adverse environment gear (+1 soak).

FLUTTERPLUME'S FAMILY

As detailed earlier, Flutterplume's family is currently in thrall to the slavers in Rusty Reach. Though bruised and beaten, they are alive and have not yet been exposed to the tyrru spice the slavers use to keep their workers pacified. If the PCs have come to Rusty Reach to free them, they can either attack the camp directly or parley with the slaver in the hopes that an arrangement can be reached.

Rusty Reach houses sixteen guards of various species. Fifty slaves are penned in squalid tunnels under the complex when they aren't being forced to sort scrap or work in the excavation pit one kilometer east of the compound. Ten of the sixteen guards ensure that the compound itself is secure, while the others mind the slaves when they are in the field.

THE REWARD, AS PROMISED

Regardless of which task the PCs performed Vandin is pleased, provided they met with success. He is more interested in getting his hands on Micael Torval and ensuring the Queen is removed from the picture. These chores were a means to an end, and even if the PCs weren't completely successful, Vandin takes it all in stride. After all, holding them back only ensures that his main goals won't be met, and he knows it.

With the successful delivery of the tyrru spice to Rusty Reach, the PCs are already in possession of the envelope with the requisite information. On the other hand, if the fight has been fixed to Illo's satisfaction, he contacts the PCs via secure comlink and offers to send them the information via courier at a place of their choosing. A courier appears a short while later and delivers a simple envelope to them.

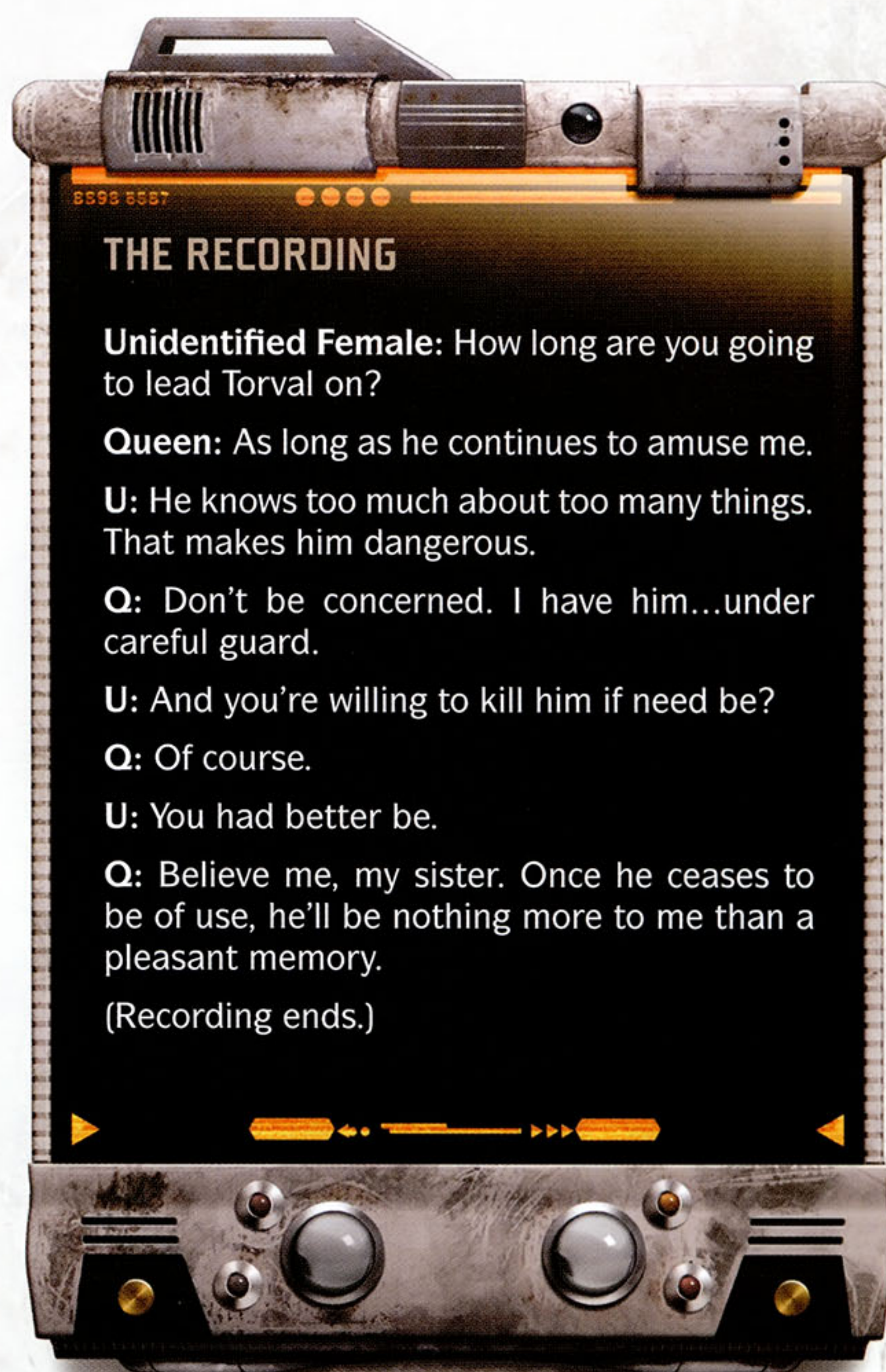
Either way, the envelope contains two things: a message from Illo Vandin, and a datachip containing an audio recording. The message from Vandin is stored in a small, disposable holo player. When it is played, his deep voice speaks the following:

"Now I fulfill my part of our bargain. Finding the Sorority's Queen is easy. All you need to do is follow her heart—or, rather, the heart of her lover. Yes, even she craves companionship. In this case, she keeps company with a card shark named Micael Torval. Torval is completely smitten by 'her majesty,' but there's one thing he doesn't know, which is liable to make their romance wither on the vine—the Queen intends to kill him."


Vandin goes on to explain that if the Player Characters reveal the Queen's intention to kill Torval, they should be able to convince him to disclose the location of her hidden lair beneath the city. However, they need to get to Torval first, and this may be difficult, considering the Queen keeps him under guard at all times. *"However, I have it on good authority that Torval is scheduled to watch the fights at the Loaded Savrip tonight,"* Vandin explains. *"Perhaps you can find him there. Once you've broken his heart, please send him my way. I can always use another apprentice..."*

The datachip included with the message contains a digital audio recording of the Pirate Queen and an unidentified female. Illo insists this other voice belongs to someone high in the Sorority's ranks, probably one of her close advisors, based on the tone of the conversation. The recording is short and direct.

When accessed, the audio recording on Illo Vandin's datachip can be played back. Though the quality of the sound isn't very good, the words are clear. The voice of the Queen—which is lightly accented, quiet, and raspy, though not distractingly so—is identifiable to anyone who's heard it before. This includes the PCs, who recognize it as identical to Revah's voice while she wore her mask.



A GAMBLER SCORNE



As per Illo Vandin's indication, the PCs find Torval at the Loaded Savrip that evening. If the PCs were there previously, dealing with Flutterplume, they are recognized and welcomed warmly by Jyd Renyr. Jyd inquires, none too subtly, whether the PC who defeated the Anvil is willing to fight again that evening. Such a match is up to the GM and the PC in question, and it nets 1,000 credits if the PC wins.




Beyond such pleasantries, Jyd is able to point out Micael Torval's private box seats to the PCs if they ask him about the gambler. "He's a special one," Jyd comments. "Got some powerful friends. Goes to some exclusive parties, too. Music, dancing, debauchery, the works. If you know him, maybe you can get me an invitation?" No matter what answer the PCs give him, Jyd fawns over them before going on his way.

Torval is accompanied by a single Sorority guard, who sits with him in his viewing box. The armored and soundproofed box is accessed by a series of wide stairwells, which Jyd (or any of the arena staff) can point out, and it can seat up to a dozen spectators.

The door into the box is electronically locked from the inside. It can be opened with a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check** or forced open with a **Daunting (◆◆◆◆) Brawl check**. If the PCs are incapable of succeeding on the proper skill check, they can knock on the door and attempt to fast-talk Torval's guard over the intercom (which requires an **Average (◆◆) Deception check**).

Charm check or a **Hard (◆◆◆) Deception check**). How they deal with the guard once they breach the viewing box is up to them, but it affects how Micael interprets their proposal.

A CANDID DISCUSSION WITH MICAEL

Torval is suspicious of anyone who finds it necessary to break into his viewing box, much less threaten him or his bodyguard. As long as he hasn't been personally attacked, however, he's willing to hear the PCs' side of the story before making up his mind one way or the other. Given his skepticism, the PCs have a difficult time convincing him that the Queen intends to kill him. Of course, the recording provided by Vandin is their key to turning the gambler against his lover. Convincing him requires an **Average (◆◆) Charm** or **Deception check**, with  added if the PCs have not displayed any threatening behavior. If the PCs are threatening, however, the check becomes an opposed one using Micael's **Cool** and **Presence**. Two or more  or one  convince him enough to have his bodyguard sent outside while he watches the recording; the PCs may otherwise need to subdue the bodyguard once the nature of the recording becomes evident.

Once convinced of his lover's duplicity, Micael sits quietly for a few moments and digests the information. He asks if he can pour a drink for himself, and if allowed (or if the PCs pour one for him) he downs it in a single, smooth motion. As his cheeks redden from a mixture of alcohol and anger, he nods and asks, "What do you want from me?"

Micael can reveal the location of the Queen's lair beneath Worlport, right down to the location of its main entrance. He can describe the areas he's been to, as well as the sort of resistance the PCs might encounter once they're inside (such as the Savrip bodyguards, if the PCs are doing well in engaging him socially). He has no desire to accompany the PCs; in fact, he plans to leave Ord Mantell as soon as he can. Should the PCs refer Micael to Illo Vandin, he thanks them for the tip. Whether he takes them up on it remains to be seen.

The Queen's lair in Worlport is an underground complex, accessed via a lift in an Industrial District warehouse. The warehouse is adjacent to a docking bay, allowing the Queen and her minions to leave Worlport in short order should they need to.



While Torval is ignorant of the lair's everyday operations, he does know that goods and services are delivered to the warehouse on a daily basis.

If asked about his relationship with the Queen, Torval is tight-lipped. He considers it private information, but he'll spill his guts if asked the following questions or variations of them:

- **When did you see the Queen last?** *"I saw her the day before yesterday. We had dinner and spent the night together."*
- **What does the Queen look like under her mask?** *"She's Ubese—pale, with porcelain skin. Her hair is black, mid-length, and her eyes are so blue that you could drown in them. She uses a breather most of the time. I guess she has issues with Type I atmospheres."*
- **What's the Queen's name?** *"She asked me to call her Noira. I'm not sure if that's her real name or not, though."*
- **Who else is inside the Queen's lair?** *"Who do you think? Plenty of thugs, pirates, and ne'er-do-wells of all stripes. There's also Ryale, her second-in-command."*
- **Can you describe Ryale?** *"You heard her voice on that...that recording of yours. She's just another one of Noira's aides, but she's got more responsibility than your average pirate. When Noira goes offworld, it's Ryale who runs things in Worlport."*
- **Are there other ways inside?** *"I'm sure there must be, but I don't know where they are or how to find them."*

Once the Q&A session has been completed to the PCs' satisfaction, they can leave the viewing box with the information they've been given. Micael remains behind and pours himself another drink as he half-heartedly observes the fighting below.

MICAEL TORVAL, PROFESSIONAL SABACC PLAYER [NEMESIS]

Micael Torval was born on the Inner Rim world of Taanab to a wealthy family. Shortly after coming of age, he attended university on Coruscant, but the stale predictability of classes and his parents' conservative expectations drove him to strike out on his own.

As he traveled the galaxy, avoiding the stream of bounty hunters his parents sent looking for him, he grew increasingly addicted to gambling. Fortunately, he had a knack for sabacc. Much of his success stemmed from his latent Force abilities, which even he is unaware of.

Though he eventually settled down on Ord Mantell, Micael doesn't intend to remain there for much longer. He had hoped to profit from his current mistress' affections before moving on. Unfortunately for him, he knows too much for the Queen to be truly comfortable with his survival outside of her purview.

Micael is a handsome man with black hair and blue eyes who looks much younger than his forty-two years. He dresses in fashionable clothes, and though not a fighter, he carries at least two holdout blasters. He is incredibly charming, and has he little trouble using his talents to further his own ends.



Skills: Charm 3, Cool 3, Deception 4, Knowledge (Education) 2, Negotiation 3, Perception 3, Ranged (Light) 1, Streetwise 2.

Talents: Force Rating 1, Sense Emotions 1 (add ☐ to all Charm, Coercion, and Deception checks unless target is immune to Force powers).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: 2 holdout blasters (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Stun setting), fashionable clothing.

SORORITY BODYGUARD [RIVAL]

Though the bodyguard is ostensibly present on behalf of the Queen to protect Micael Torval, he is actually there to ensure Micael remains loyal. He is also under orders to kill Torval should the need ever arise.

The bodyguard is a male human who dresses in casual, yet functional, clothing and carries a blaster pistol in a concealed holster.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Cool 2, Melee 2, Piloting (Planetary) 2, Ranged (Light) 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Targeted Blow (may spend one Destiny Point to add damage equal to his Agility to one hit of a successful attack).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), heavy clothing (+1 soak), comlink.

CLEARING THE AIR

Getting into the Sorority palace isn't easy, but ingenious PCs are likely to come up with their own methods. If the GM is willing to roll with their ideas and can rein them in if they get too off track, the PCs should be able to reach the Sorority's hidden base. PCs who prefer to contact Jander for suggestions can do so, but the Toydarian gives them no end of trouble about their perceived laziness. *"I thought you fellas were professionals,"* he complains. *"I've got my own life to live here!"*

Despite his complaints, Jander thinks about it for a moment and suggests a plan. Ambrae Environmental is a well-known local company that provides life support, air conditioning, and air filtration services in Worlport. Its offices are in the Industrial District, but according to Jander, they aren't particularly secure. He suggests the PCs break into Ambrae Environmental's motor pool and steal whatever they need to impersonate a maintenance crew. *"That's my brilliant plan,"* he says snidely. *"If you got somethin' else in mind, get to it."*

If the PCs don't take Jander's bait, let them use their own wits to determine a course of action, and use the following narrative as a guide to whatever sort of heist they intend to pursue. Allowing the PCs to notice Ambrae Environmental's activities as they scout the area, rather than having Jander supply the information to them, is another reasonable option.

AMBRAE ENVIRONMENTAL

The Industrial District is well known for its pollutants, and so people that work or live there wear breath masks at all hours of the day. Those not wearing breath masks find that they become short of breath and nauseous from the effluvium, resulting in a penalty of ■ to all checks until they leave the district. As the PCs approach the Ambrae motor pool, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The filthy atmosphere in the Industrial District is even more pronounced than in the rest of the city. The smells of exhaust and sulfur mingle with an odor of burning plastoid, taking your breath away and making you feel sick. The district is dirty, the ferrocrete buildings stained by centuries of industrial corruption.

Ambrae Environmental's motor pool is in the middle of the Industrial District. It consists of a small parking lot adjacent to a large garage. A high fence surrounds both the lot and the garage, monitored via electronic security measures. In addition to the security provided by the fence, a small pack of Corellian bloodhounds stalks the lot, and a single security guard keeps track of the fence's sensors from a booth adjacent to the garage.

Neat rows of off-white repulsorvans and combustion-driven ground vans—each marked with the Ambrae Environmental logo—section the parking lot. Keys for the vans are kept in the security booth, while Ambrae uniform items, such as coveralls, can be found in the garage. The PCs need to successfully breach the security, deal with the hounds, and take care of the guard in order to obtain the items they need.

BREAKING AND ENTERING

The high fence that encircles the motor pool is rigged with motion sensors and surveillance optics. Climbing the fence is simple, requiring an **Easy (◆) Athletics check**. However, the PCs also need to contend with the aforementioned security measures if they want their climbing attempts to go unnoticed.

The party can spot the sensors and surveillance optics with an **Average (◆ ◆) Perception check**. Once noticed, they can be circumvented or disabled with a **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Computers** or **Skulduggery check**. Failure on this final check alerts the security guard of an intrusion, as well as its precise location. When alerted, the guard immediately calls for backup, and two additional guards arrive in an armored landspeeder five rounds later (or sooner, if the GM desires). If the guard detects the PCs by seeing or hearing them himself, his response is the same.

Beyond the fence await the security guard and three Corellian bloodhounds. The hounds patrol the lot silently, lurking beneath vehicles and watching out for intruders. Unless the PCs are moving quietly and successfully perform **Hard (◆ ◆ ◆) Stealth checks**, the dogs hear them and silently move in to attack as a pack. When attacking, the dogs focus on one individual at a time, only retreating if two or more of them have been taken down.

The garage is locked down. It has two bay doors, along with two reinforced doors. Though the bay doors must be opened from the inside, the reinforced doors are equipped with good-quality electronic locks.

Opening the locks requires a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Computers check** or a **Daunting** (◆◆◆◆) **Skulduggery check**. There is no one inside the garage, and a number of vehicles are parked inside in various states of repair. Work-related gear and uniforms for most common species can be found in one of the garage's storage rooms.

Unless the PCs steal the keys to a van from the security booth, they need to hot-wire one of them. Hot-wiring a repulsorvan isn't difficult for an experienced thief, and requires an **Average** (◆◆) **Mechanics** or **Skulduggery check**.

**AMBRAE ENVIRONMENTAL
SECURITY GUARD [MINION]**

The guards hired to keep Ambrae Environmental's assets secure aren't the best in the district, let alone the business. They have families, and they just want to do their job and go home after their shift is over. They don't take excessive risks and would prefer to call for backup rather than play the hero. That said, they do their job to the best of their ability, but if confronted by a superior force, they gladly lay down their weapons or retreat.

2

2

2

2

2

2

BRAWN

AGILITY

INTELLECT

CUNNING

WILLPOWER

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

4

W. THRESHOLD

4

M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills (group only): Melee, Perception, Piloting (Planetary), Ranged (Light), Vigilance.
Talents: None.
Abilities: None.
Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), truncheon (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2), padded armor (+2 soak), breath mask, comlink.

CORELLIAN BLOODHOUND [MINION]

Corellian bloodhounds are often kept as pets and guard animals, though packs of wild bloodhounds occasionally roam in areas where they've been transplanted. Unlike most canids, they rarely bark or yelp. When they do bark, however, the vocalization has a whisper-like quality. This behavior is instinctual, as Corellian bloodhounds in the wild rely on stealth to ambush their prey.

At up to one meter in length, Corellian bloodhounds are slim and agile, relying on stealth and speed rather than brute strength to take down prey. A fine coat of tiny quills covers their body, and their head features an oversized snout to aid in scenting prey, and a mouth lined with sharp, dagger-like teeth.

2

4

1

3

2

2

BRAWN

AGILITY

INTELLECT

CUNNING

WILLPOWER

PRESENCE

SOAK VALUE

2

W. THRESHOLD

4

M/R DEFENSE

0

0

Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Perception, Stealth, Vigilance.
Talents: None.
Abilities: Scent (add □□ to Survival checks made to track prey).
Equipment: Teeth (Brawl; Damage 3; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]).

**ONE GOOD BLUFF
DESERVES ANOTHER**

The Sorority's warehouse, which houses the entrance to the Queen's underground palace, is a large metallic structure streaked with grime and pitted by rust. From the outside, it appears to be little more than an abandoned factory or storage building. Not far from the warehouse is a starship docking bay, which is currently unoccupied. Though the docking bay is empty, it is locked down.

Unless the PCs have made other plans, they can drive their repulsorvan to the warehouse's bay door. If they knock, or merely wait a few minutes, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

A male Twi'lek in bulky jacket emerges from a side door at the warehouse, and approaches the repulsorvan's driver-side door. His hand openly rests on the butt of a heavy blaster that hangs in a holster at his side. "What do you want?" he asks, obviously irritated.

The PCs need to convince the Twi'lek to let them into the warehouse. This requires an **Average** (◆◆) **Coercion** or **Deception check**, depending on the tactic the PCs choose (this text assumes the PCs are using an Ambrae Environmental van to support their cover story, but the PCs may try a different approach).

If the PCs manufacture some kind of corroborating evidence—forged work orders or something similar—the PC making the Coercion or Deception check benefits from □ during the initial check. Depending on other tactics the PCs might use—mentioning that people are liable to die, or implying that the guard could be seriously punished (or killed) for holding them back—they might earn an additional □.

If the PCs are able to fool the Twi'lek guard, he returns to the warehouse and opens the bay door. He does this manually, revealing a cavernous interior that is brightly lit and stacked with all manner of goods. At the far end of the warehouse is a lift. Four other guards mill about and stare at the PCs' van, obviously curious. The Twi'lek then waves the PCs in to a parking space near the lift while he closes and locks the bay door behind them. Should the PCs fail to fool him, he refuses to open the door (and he may call for other guards should the PCs generate ☹ ☹ ☹).

With the rest of the pirate guards looking on, the Twi'lek allows the PCs to emerge from the repulsorvan, and to bring with them any equipment they may need to do their "work." He then escorts them to the lift, climbs aboard, and hits the button. The lift descends shakily into the ground, and the Twi'lek comments, "I hate this part." Though businesslike, he's happy to have a conversation with someone who isn't a pirate, especially if he finds that person attractive.

Shortly, the lift shudders to a stop. The Twi'lek opens the door and leads the PCs down a series of hallways. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The twisting passages are clean and dry, and the air inside carries no trace of contaminants or pollution. You pass a number of people as the Twi'lek guard leads you on, including a gaggle of finely dressed courtiers who whisper to one another under their breath. You can hear the sound of lively music from the direction of an adjoining corridor just up ahead.

If the PCs ask the Twi'lek about the source of the music, he'll shrug and say, "Sounds like entertainment for the royalty. She gets some good acts." Unless the PCs decide to proceed to the Queen's audience chamber at this point, the Twi'lek continues to lead them deeper into the palace, eventually reaching a large room filled with thrumming life support machinery. "This is it," he says. "Seems normal to me. Are you sure there's something wrong with it?"

This is a perfect time for the PCs to deal with their Twi'lek guide, as there is no one else in the room, and the noise of the equipment is loud enough to drown out the sounds of a struggle and cries for assistance. Retracing their steps toward the corridor leading to the Queen's audience chamber does not require a check for any PCs who mentioned they were keeping track of the route. If no one made a conscious effort to do so, remembering the way requires an **Average (◆◆) Survival check**. Any ☹ generated by this check reduces the time it takes to get there, while any ☹ generated results in a few wrong turns. If two or more ☹ are generated, the PCs encounter a pair of palace guards (see page 70), who confront them.

"HEY, GUYS, DOESN'T THIS SEEM A BIT EASY?"

At some point, the PCs may get suspicious, given the ease with which they've managed to infiltrate the Queen's palace. Unfortunately for them, they're absolutely correct. The Queen has allowed them to move more or less unharmed through the palace so she can ensure they are dealt with in a permanent manner. By the time the PCs figure it out, though, it is already too late.

THE THRONE ROOM

Making their way to the throne room is an uneventful process, assuming the PCs remember the way. When they arrive, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The sounds of a party grow louder as you creep down the wide passageway. Multicolored lights flash ahead of you, and rhythmic music pulses a harrowing beat. Emerging from the passageway, you see a large room filled with well-dressed courtiers variously dancing, talking, drinking, or enjoying the show. Tables filled with fine drinks and rich foods seem to be everywhere. Guards, looking bored, stand at attention near the walls. Standing upon a raised dais, you see a stately female figure wearing a mask. Behind her is a blond woman in a glittering suit.

The stately female figure is the Pirate Queen—or, at least, her hologram. PCs can attempt a **Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check** to discern that the Queen is only a projection, and any PCs with special vision (such as infrared, thermal, or some other enhanced spectrum) gain one or more ☐ to this check at the Game Master's option.

As the PCs move further into the throne room, regardless of their intentions or stealth, a set of blast doors slams shut behind them. The blaring music stops, and the conversation of the courtiers tapers off into stunned silence. The raspy, seductive, and familiar voice of the Pirate Queen rises from the dais as the floor clears. "We have guests, my friends. Let us welcome them."

The PCs are left standing on the empty floor, surrounded by guards and surprised revelers. The Queen peers at them from behind her mask, while the blond woman behind her smiles smugly. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

"It has been quite pleasant watching your antics from afar. You are certainly a resourceful bunch—the Consortium is lucky to have you—but you have been far too successful in your attempts to find me. As a result, I must ensure that your efforts come to naught.

"Ryale here will see to your destruction. I, on the other hand, have a rendezvous with another valuable Consortium shipment. Goodbye, for we will not be meeting again."

The Queen flickers suddenly, then disappears.

THE MAIN EVENT

Ryale Wei, the woman in the glittering suit, claps her hands and says, "Tur! Kel! Show these guests how we deal with assassins!" From the shadows to either side of the dais, two Mantellian Savrips emerge. They are both dressed in heavy armor, and each carries a large spiked mace. One of them snarls as they surge forward toward the Player Characters.

The PCs have one round before the two Savrips are on top of them. The rest of the palace guards remain at their posts, as none of them are willing to get in the way of the beasts. Ryale observes from the dais, only taking cover if she is shot at or otherwise attacked. The courtiers watch from the sidelines, fascinated and oblivious to the danger they're in.

If the Player Characters manage to defeat both of the Savrips, the courtiers variously gasp and scream as they attempt to leave the chamber en masse, trampling or crushing palace guards and other courtiers in their desperation. Four palace guards remain behind, and they attempt to defend Ryale to the best of their ability. As for herself, Ryale remains in a hiding spot behind the dais.

Once the remaining guards and Savrips have been neutralized, Ryale emerges from her hiding place, her hands held high. "I surrender," she says, though her tone indicates that she doesn't fear captivity. "Kill me and you'll lose more information than you can ever hope to discover on your own."



With Ryale in tow, the PCs can retreat from the Queen's palace and make their way back to the lift. The passageways and corridors are chaotic and panicked, as courtiers and guards alike attempt to make their way out. A few may try to get in the PCs' way, at the GM's discretion, but such encounters should be glossed over rather than played out in detail, to avoid an anticlimax.

At some point during their escape, Ryale, ever the gracious host, mentions that she knows another way out of the palace. If the Player Characters agree, she leads them to a private lift in a concealed room behind the dais. Otherwise, the PCs must find a way out on their own. Discovering the concealed room behind the dais independently of Ryale requires a **Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check**. The lift within is luxurious, and it takes the PCs up to the warehouse's adjacent docking bay. Four guards watch over the docking bay, but they refrain from shooting if Ryale is with the PCs, for fear of hurting her.

SORORITY COURTIER [MINION]

Many of the guests, hangers-on, and sycophants in the Pirate Queen's court are kept around for amusement's sake. Their role is to ensure that the palace environment is festive and relaxing at all times. The turnover rate for such courtiers is fairly high; any who displease the Queen or outlive their usefulness seamlessly vanish without a trace.

Courtiers don't fight unless there is no other option open to them. Each wears glamorous, bright apparel, and any weapons they possess are purely decorative.



Skills (group only): Charm, Deception, Knowledge (Underworld), Streetwise.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Flamboyant clothing.

SORORITY PALACE GUARD [MINION]

The pirates who act as guards inside the Queen's palace are experienced troops of a variety of species and genders. They don't wear specific uniforms, though most of them wear heavy clothing.

The guards take their jobs seriously, but are pirates at heart—many of them are bored and hope they can go back to doing what they enjoy most: namely, taking prizes in space. This makes them complacent and sloppy, which is a boon for the PCs.



Skills (group only): Coercion, Cool, Discipline, Melee, Ranged (Heavy).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster carbine (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibro-sword (Melee; Damage 5; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 1), heavy clothing uniforms (+1 soak).

TUR AND KEL, SAVRIP GUARDS [NEMESIS]

The Queen keeps two Savrip guards, Kel and Tur, near her throne at all times. The two have been raised from birth to serve the Sorority, and they will gladly die for their Queen. The Queen uses the two Savrips to strike fear into the hearts of her subordinates and enemies.

Kel and Tur wear fine, custom-made armor, and each one wields a huge spiked mace crafted from a black, nonreflective alloy.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Melee 3, Resilience 3, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Durable 2 (subtract 20 from Critical Injury rolls made against the Savrip), Frenzied Attack 1 (suffer 1 strain to upgrade ability of a Melee or Brawl combat check once).

Abilities: Berserk Rage (when the Savrip has suffered any wounds, it deals +1 damage to Brawl and Melee attacks; when the Savrip is Critically Injured, it instead deals +2 damage to Brawl and Melee attacks).

Equipment: Spiked mace (Melee; Damage 9; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3, Pierce 2), armored clothing (+1 defense, +1 soak).

RYALE WEI, MAJORDOMO [NEMESIS]

Ryale Wei has ably served the Veiled Sorority for most of her life. Though she's always aspired to assume the role of Pirate Queen eventually, she takes some comfort in being a loyal second-in-command. She firmly believes that most of the Queen's decisions are actually hers anyway, and she enjoys taking credit for the Queen's actions.


Ryale is a female human in her middle years, with platinum hair and golden eyes. She's vain to a fault and has used regenerative treatments to maintain her youthful appearance for many years now. Aside from her extreme vanity, she is also overconfident. She knows the PCs are coming for the Queen, and she believes, without a doubt, that they are going to fail.

Even if confronted with violence, Ryale doesn't fight back. She prefers to guarantee her safety through surrender and delaying tactics.

2	2	4	4	3	4
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
2	13	13	0	0	

Skills: Charm 3, Coercion 4, Cool 3, Deception 4, Knowledge (Underworld) 4, Leadership 4, Melee 3, Streetwise 4.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target two times), Nobody's Fool 2 (when targeted by a Charm, Coercion, or Deception check, upgrade difficulty twice).

Abilities: Leader (all subordinates within medium range add  to all Discipline checks).

Equipment: Vibrorapier (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 5).

INTERMISSION

Once the PCs have escaped from the Queen's palace, Jander directs them to a secluded but clean flophouse in the Breakwater, the neighborhood near Worlport Bay, where they can take their time interrogating Ryale. Note that should Ryale have perished during the battle, the GM can have this information revealed via another NPC, such as a senior courtier, or be found on a secure datachip among her possessions.

For her part, Ryale attempts to resist most of the PCs' attempts to extract information from her. However, if the PCs lean on her vanity and threaten to disfigure her or damage her face, she submits at once and tells them everything they want to know, including the following tidbits:

- The Queen is hardly immortal. In fact, the title is passed down from the Queen to someone on her council of advisors in an unbroken chain of succession. Ryale has no idea where the current Queen is located now, however.
- The Veiled Sorority has had a mole concealed within the Zann Consortium for some time, but only the Pirate Queen knows the mole's identity.
- Ryale also reveals the nature of the Veiled Sorority's next strike against the Consortium, including the timing and coordinates of the ambush. She doesn't know anything about the size of the force that is to be committed to this attack, though.

This last piece of information is the most vital, as it pinpoints the Queen's exact location and her next target. If it is conveyed to Venlana immediately, the Consortium can attempt to turn the Sorority's ambush against it and finally capture or kill the Queen.

EPISODE II XP REWARDS

Standard experience point rewards for **Episode II**:

- "Fixing" Flutterplume's fight, regardless of the method: 5 XP
- Negotiating and performing in the fighting arena of the Loaded Savrip: 5 XP
- Traveling to Rusty Reach to make Vandin's delivery: 5 XP
- Saving Evun and his family from the Savrips: 5 XP
- Saving Flutterplume's family: 5 XP
- Successfully negotiating with Micael Torval: 5 XP
- Gaining entry to the Sorority palace and defeating Ryale Wei: 5 XP
- Additional encounters: 5 XP

As always, the GM should award bonus XP for good roleplaying and engaging with the PCs' Motivations and Obligations.





PREPARE FOR BOARDERS

"The Queen has played her last gambit. With a little help, she and the scum with her end here."

—Consortium Admiral Jerid Sykes

In **Episode III** of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the PCs finally face Noira herself, the elusive Pirate Queen. To do so, they must race to the location of the Sorority's next ambush, board the failing *Renegade's Blood*, and capture Noira before she can escape.

- **General Quarters:** The PCs return to their ship, only to find it isn't at all how they left it.
- **Into Eternal Night:** Consortium ships have been sent to intercept the Sorority ambush. Can the PCs get there in time to join the battle?
- **Welcoming Party:** When the PCs board the *Renegade's Blood*, they find the Queen's vessel to be more dangerous inside than out!
- **A Bridge Too Far:** Once the PCs make it to the bridge of the *Renegade's Blood*, they must defeat the Queen's guards and somehow subdue her in the process.
- **Contract Fulfilled:** With Noira out of the picture, the PCs return to Saleucami to receive their payment—and more, if they are interested.

Even as the PCs prepare to leave Ord Mantell behind, the Zann Consortium is laying a trap of its own for the Veiled Sorority. The information gleaned from Ryale allows Tyber Zann to pinpoint the exact location of the pirates' next ambush. While the Consortium convoy is diverted away from the ambush zone, a more heavily armed Consortium flotilla led by Jerid Sykes takes its place.

Despite the powerful attack ships in the Consortium's fleet, Sykes's direct orders from Tyber Zann are to take the Queen alive or provide positive proof of her demise. The PCs are responsible for bringing Noira to justice, but they must hurry before their opportunity slips away. When the PCs arrive, the battle is well under way, and the *Renegade's Blood* is incapacitated—for the moment.

For the PCs', finally cornering and capturing the Queen requires both luck and skill, and fulfilling the contract becomes more deadly at every turn. Nevertheless, Tyber Zann is even less forgiving of failure than he is of treachery...

GENERAL QUARTERS

Once the PCs have extracted the crucial intelligence from Ryale, they should contact the Zann Consortium and relay their discovery to Venlana (should they contact Jander, he sneeringly tells them to call Venlana, as his part of the job is over). The Pantoran doesn't seem surprised by the revelation, and she informs the Player Characters that their job is hardly finished. *"An assault flotilla, disguised as a Consortium convoy, is en route to the coordinates,"* she curtly informs them. *"With luck, you can form up with them and see to the Queen's ultimate capture."*

Despite the news, easily the best the PCs have given Venlana since they took the contract, she seems distracted. Any PC who succeeds on an upgraded **Daunting** (◆◆◆) **Vigilance check** can discern that Venlana is deeply troubled by something she has not mentioned. If asked about her discomfort, she dismisses the PCs and abruptly cuts the comm channel.

Once this critical intelligence has been passed on to Venlana, the PCs need decide what to do with Ryale Wei. Venlana and Jander urge the PCs to tie up loose ends, but they recognize that the matter of the Pirate Queen is likely to be resolved soon regardless of what the PCs do with Ryale. Ryale, if she hears of the Consortium's counter-ambush, loses her once unshakable confidence; GMs should adapt her reactions thereafter to the party's treatment of her.

Regardless of the outcome, the PCs need to make their way back to their ship in its docking bay. Outside of Worlport's usual traffic patterns, there is little to slow them down as they proceed across town one more time. Should the GM like to introduce a complication—possibly a modular encounter of some kind—this is a perfect opportunity to do so.

SABOTAGE!

When the PCs enter their docking bay, they discover that their ship's loading ramp is down. If they arranged armed security for their ship, they find the telltale blast points and burn marks of a struggle in the docking bay. At the GM's discretion, the PCs' allies may be dead, wounded, or otherwise in disarray.

If the PCs hired security contractor JR-12 to monitor their ship, they find the droid in the docking bay. It is seriously damaged, but still conscious and attempting to initiate self-repairs. If approached, JR-12 makes a sound that conveys both irritation and dismay. *"Apologies: offered,"* it mutters. *"Intruders: worse for wear. Note: only four remain functional."* Though the droid tries to stand and provide additional support, JR-12 is in terrible shape and is unable to function in any capacity until repaired.

There are currently six pirate saboteurs aboard the PCs' ship; if desired, the GM can instead have these be local thugs, upset that the PCs didn't hire them for "security." If the PCs hired JR-12 to protect the ship, or if they keep combat-capable NPCs on board, two of the saboteurs are heavily wounded and unconscious, while two more stand guard at the top of the ship's loading ramp. The last two saboteurs are hurriedly attempting to dismantle the ship's hyperdrive system, where they intend to plant a powerful explosive device that is set to trigger when the hyperdrive is activated.

Unless the Player Characters have another method to enter their ship, they must advance up the loading ramp (or equivalent) in order to confront their adversaries. Once the two pirates defending the ship's entryway have been taken out, the PCs can search their ship for the remaining saboteurs. They find them in their ship's engineering section, installing some kind of device within the guts of the vessel's hyperdrive. The pirates, their backs to the proverbial and literal wall, draw their weapons and fight to the death.

BOMBS EXPLODE. IT'S WHAT THEY DO.

If the Player Characters don't locate the bomb, it explodes when they attempt to activate the hyperdrive. The bomb deals 15 damage to any characters engaged with it. It also wrecks the hyperdrive, inflicting a Major System Failure critical hit that affects the ship's primary hyperdrive.

The PCs can repair this critical hit by making a **Hard** (◆◆◆) **Mechanics check** as normal. Alternatively, if the PCs' ship has a backup hyperdrive, they can use this to attempt to reach the battle (although this will likely mean they arrive late in the course of the conflict).

The presence of the bomb is not meant to curtail the PCs' advancement in the story, however. It is instead intended to provide them with an obstacle, thereby generating additional tension and excitement in the game. Game Masters who wish to use the bomb should be judicious about it, as well as its effects. The PCs have spent a great deal of time tracking down the Queen, and to fail at this point due to an unsuccessful Mechanics check is a major disappointment. It can, however, add tension as the PCs race to get to the battle on time.



LENDING A HELPING APPENDAGE

Considerate Player Characters may try to help JR-12. Though admirable, there isn't enough time to get the droid functioning and back on its feet. Other PCs may decide to take JR-12 with them. The droid doesn't complain or protest. JR-12 continues to attempt self-repairs, and offers gratitude to anyone who helps it put its pieces back together.

If taken along and repaired en route to the Veiled Sorority's coordinates, JR-12 gladly offers to help the PCs during the imminent encounter. Its repairs require an **Average (◆◆) Mechanics check** and 750 credits' worth of parts. Should JR-12 survive the conflict, the PCs may be able to convince it to become a part of their crew. The droid's ultimate decision is up to the Game Master, and should depend on how the PCs have behaved, as well as on how they've treated JR-12.

Depending on the amount of time it takes the PCs to return to the ship and track the saboteurs down, the GM may determine that the pirates have had enough time to successfully place their explosive device. PCs with ranks in either Perception or Mechanics automatically find the bomb.

The device can be removed from the hyperdrive with a **Hard (◆◆◆) Skulduggery** or **Average (◆◆) Mechanics check**. Should either of these two checks result in ☹, the bomb explodes, dealing 15 damage to all targets engaged with it. The damage to the hyperdrive is covered in the **Bombs Explode. It's What they Do** sidebar on page 74.

SORORITY SABOTEUR [MINION]

The saboteurs sent by the Sorority weren't expecting the PCs to show up so soon, nor did they suspect that the PCs' security arrangements (especially JR-12, if applicable) would be so formidable. At this point, they're scrambling to get their job done and escape. In combat, the saboteurs fight in groups of two.



Skills (group only): Computers, Mechanics, Melee, Ranged (Light), Skulduggery.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), heavy clothing (+1 soak), utility belt.

INTO ETERNAL NIGHT

Once the PCs have secured their ship, disarmed any detected bombs, and patched up any damage caused by the pirate saboteurs, they are cleared for takeoff and head for their hyperspace jump point. The ship is eerily quiet as Ord Mantell shrinks into the distance behind them, but all seems normal despite the recent firefight. The PCs have some time now to see to their wounds and equipment, including JR-12's repairs if he was brought along for the ride.

The coordinates that Ryale provided point to a secluded patch of space between Ord Mantell and the M'shinni agriworld of Genassa, where ships often drop out of hyperspace to plot out their next route. Though the coordinates are well plotted, getting to them still requires an **Average (◆◆) Astrogation check** and at least twelve hours of travel time with a Class 2 hyperdrive. Success means the PCs can rest and repair in peace, arriving on schedule as agreed. Depending on any resulting ☹ or ☹☹, the PCs' ship may be early or late to the party.

With a ★, the Player Characters' ship arrives at the designated coordinates just after the Zann Consortium ships begin attacking the Veiled Sorority's forces. The adventure approaches the battle from this point in the section **Arrival and Chaos**, on page 76. A particularly good Astrogation check with ☹☹☹ or ☹☹ might allow the PCs to arrive early and form up with the Consortium fleet before the Sorority's vessels even appear.

If the PCs arrive early, they can fly in lasers blazing once the pirates arrive, weakening the Sorority's fighter squadrons and getting a few licks in on the *Renegade's Blood* before they board the ship. If the PCs arrive late, though (perhaps due to ☹☹), they must scramble to dock with the Queen's vessel. This should ratchet up the encounter's tension, however, rather than reduce the contributions they're able to make.

BATTLE PLANS

The Veiled Sorority was not expecting its ambush to be effectively countered by the Zann Consortium. However, the pirates did expect heavier resistance and escort vessels, which is why the Queen wasn't particularly concerned by the presence of so many military-grade ships. The Sorority has become overconfident and complacent in light of its easy prior victories, and this is its primary weakness as the battle moves forward.

Insofar as the Zann Consortium is concerned, its forces are as prepared as they can be. Based on intelligence gathered during prior attacks on its cargo ships, it knows the general composition of the Sorority's fleet. The Consortium has done its best to exceed—or at least match—the Sorority's firepower and offensive capabilities.

The Consortium's plan, devised by Jerid Sykes, is simple. The objective is to disable the Sorority flagship while destroying or, if possible, capturing the other pirate vessels. While the *End of Days* occupies the *Savrip*, the Consortium's StarVipers are to assault *Renegade's Blood*, beating down its shields and disabling it with their ion weapons. This should allow a boarding party to dock with the *Renegade's Blood* and search for the Queen. **Mechanically**, this bombardment is keeping the *Renegade's Blood* from moving or entering hyperspace. Its weapons and shields are still functional, though.

Though the Consortium does have frigate support in the form of two Interceptor IVs—the *Flatline* and the *Brilliance*—its ships are outnumbered by the Sorority's light freighters, bulk transports, and two squadrons of *Cutlass-9s*. Sykes isn't too concerned, though, as he believes the skill and expertise of his own pilots more than even the odds. Nevertheless, he does expect the *Cutlass-9s* to cause trouble until they're taken out of the picture.

ARRIVAL AND CHAOS

The final conflict between the Zann Consortium and the Veiled Sorority is fought to the end in deep space. Masquerading as a simple convoy, the Consortium flotilla has been ordered to reveal itself only once the Sorority has committed itself to action. All of this occurs prior to the Player Characters' arrival, and the battle is well underway when they emerge from hyperspace. A list of the ships on each side is detailed on page 79 for the Zann Consortium flotilla and 82 for the Veiled Sorority's fleet.



SURGICAL STRIKES

If the Player Characters are particularly fond of space combat, they may enjoy contributing to the increasing decrepitude of the *Renegade's Blood* before boarding it. If this is the case, the GM is encouraged to have Sykes give the PCs some very specific orders for their attacks on the enemy flagship. In particular, targeting a number of specific ship's systems would go a long way toward crippling the pirate vessel.

When attacking specific shipboard systems, the Player Characters follow the rules for targeting on page 201 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook, and so add ■ ■ to the combat check if one maneuver is spent to aim (if two consecutive maneuvers are spent, this is reduced to ■). In addition, the hit must deal at least four hull trauma to also disable the system being targeted. If the attack does so, the ship suffers a Major System Failure Critical Hit, with the component affected depending on the system targeted. The three systems on the *Renegade's Blood* that Sykes specifically calls out for attack are the comms, shields, and sensors.

- **Comms:** Positioned aft of the ship's deflector shield projector is the communications dish. Destroying the dish prevents the pirates aboard the ship from communicating with the other ships of their fleet.
- **Shields:** Located along the spine of the *Renegade's Blood*, the deflector shield projector is currently inert due to the Consortium's continual ion fire. Sykes knows that there's no better time to inhibit a vessel's defensive systems than when it's helpless. Destroying this system lowers the ship's defence by one point in all zones
- **Sensors:** By hitting the navigational sensors system, located near the ship's bridge, the PCs can inhibit control of the ship as well as its astrogation systems. Though this doesn't prevent the *Renegade's Blood* from going into hyperspace, it does reduce its sensor range by one range band.

When the Player Characters drop out of hyperspace, an impressive sight greets them. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

As your ship drops out of hyperspace and slows to sublight speed, the majestic and terrifying sight of a raging space battle greets you. A Consular-class cruiser founders as crackling bolts of blue ion energy dance across her hull. A pair of StarVipers circle the Consular like hawks, their ion cannons firing continuously to keep the ship at bay.

In the distance, a Marauder-class corvette rips into a hulking Star Galleon. Starfighters and light freighters jockey for position between the larger frigates, dodging and weaving to avoid debris and each other.

Shortly after they arrive, the PCs' communicator chimes urgently, and a grizzled human face with half a day's growth of grey stubble appears on their view screen. He wears a crisp blue uniform with a smattering of colorful insignia pinned to the left breast of his coat. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

"I was wondering when you planned to show up," he chastises. Though the man is stern, he isn't accusatory. "I'm Jerid Sykes, Consortium fleet commander. You're under my command now, and I expect you to do precisely what I say."

Once introductions are out of the way, Sykes brings the PCs up to speed on the situation. Currently, the *Renegade's Blood*—the Sorority flagship—is being harried by two of his StarVipers. The starfighters are maintaining heavy ion fire on the Consular-class light cruiser so that a boarding party can dock with the ship while it's helpless. "With that Marauder inbound, those two aren't going to last much longer," Sykes says. "We've got her hyperdrive down, but you need to get over there and dock with the *Renegade's Blood* before it's too late, got that?"

Sykes is in no mood for an idle chat. Though he's following his orders to the letter, he's none too pleased that Tyber Zann insists that the Queen be captured. Though he understands his master's insistence, he's certain that boarding the ship and capturing the Queen—or providing proof of her death—is a fool's errand, wasteful in crew and materiel. He won't admit this to the PCs, as it would undermine Tyber Zann's authority, but he may allude to it accidentally.

GETTING INTO THE (DOG)FIGHT

With Sykes's orders fresh in their ears, the Player Characters must turn their starship toward the *Renegade's Blood*. The *Savrip*, a *Marauder*-class corvette, slowly approaches from long range, its turbolasers sending bolts of green fire at the *End of Days*, Sykes's flagship. Just when the PCs feel their target is well within their grasp, a pair of Sorority *Cutlass-9* starfighters emerge from one of the *Savrip*'s flight decks and peel off toward their ship.

The timing of the fighter attack couldn't be worse, and it only serves to distract the PCs from their goal as the *Savrip* draws closer. Fortunately, the Sorority's starfighters aren't particularly sturdy and present relatively easy targets. If the PCs are outmatched, the GM can allow one or two of the Consortium's StarVipers from Sabacc Squadron to turn and intercept the fighters (see page 81). Even if the PCs aren't able to shoot the fighters down, the Consortium pilots should be able to get one or two of them if necessary.

The Sorority's *Cutlass-9* starfighters begin their attack run by launching concussion missiles at the Player Characters' ship, following the salvo up with several bursts of laser fire. Both pilots perform the Stay on Target maneuver (see page 233 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook) where possible, making them easier targets for both the PCs and, if applicable, the StarVipers.

As the encounter proceeds, the GM should only roll initiative and track hull trauma and system strain for the ships the PCs are actively engaging (or being engaged by). The rest of the battle plays out narratively (see **The Reality of War**, on page 79).

Regardless of how long the dogfight lasts, the Game Master should stress to the Player Characters that it's imperative they get to the *Renegade's Blood* before the *Savrip* can come to its rescue. It is not necessary for the GM to mark off rounds in a countdown for this, but if the PCs are not moving quickly, the GM should add prompts such as nearby explosions or desperate and furious communications from Admiral Sykes. The PCs may even want to spend a few Destiny Points to hasten their progress.

Once one of the Sorority's fighters has been destroyed, the second banks away and attempts to put a concussion missile through a StarViper. This frees the PCs up to continue their mission to dock with the *Renegade's Blood*, leading to a final encounter with the real Pirate Queen.



CUTLASS-9 PATROL FIGHTER

The Veiled Sorority uses the *Cutlass-9* as its primary starfighter. Nearly all of them have been upgraded with high-output ion turbines, the sole modification the Sorority has implemented.

Produced in vast quantities by the SoroSuub Corporation prior to the rise of the Empire, these fighters were intended for use by SoroSuub alone. During the Clone Wars, however, SoroSuub supplied them to the Confederacy of Independent Systems. Following the defeat of the Separatists, SoroSuub ceased production. However, thousands of *Cutlass-9*s remain in planetary arsenals and pirate fleets across the galaxy.

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEF. FORE/PORT/STARBOARD/AFT	ARMOR
3	3	0	1 - - 1	2
			HT THRESHOLD	SS THRESHOLD
			8	8

Hull Type/Class: Starfighter/Cutlass.

Manufacturer: SoroSuub Corporation.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: None.

Navicomputer: Yes.

Sensor Range: Close.

Ship's Complement: One pilot.

Encumbrance Capacity: 12.

Passenger Capacity: 0.

Consumables: 2 days.

Price/Rarity: 40,000 credits/4.

Customization Hard Points: 3.

Weapons: Two forward mounted medium laser cannons (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 1).

Forward mounted concussion missile launcher (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Breach 4, Blast 4, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 8, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

CUSTOMIZATIONS

High-Output Ion Turbine: +1 speed, -1 system strain threshold (this has already been factored into the *Cutlass-9*'s profile and cost, and occupies one of the ship's hard points).



SORORITY FIGHTER JOCKEY [MINION]

The ranks of the Sorority's fighter jockeys are filled with pirates who have some experience piloting starships, and who have been pressed into service (willingly or not) as fighter pilots. Though only a few of these pilots are available, the Sorority's recent successes against the Zann Consortium have boosted their morale considerably.

Sorority fighter jockeys aren't particularly skilled, but they are cocky and overconfident nonetheless. They fly as if they were impervious to damage and take risks that no sane fighter pilot would dare to take. Despite (or because of) this, their mortality rate has been astonishingly low—until now, at least.



Skills (group only): Astrogation, Gunnery, Piloting (Space), Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), utility belt, flight suit and helmet.

THE REALITY OF WAR

While the battle begins as planned, the wild card in the conflict turns out to be the *Savrip*, the Sorority's *Marauder*-class corvette. Powerful and boasting an experienced crew, the *Savrip* manages to knock out the *Retribution*—a Consortium *Star Galleon*-class frigate—during the battle's opening salvos. Though the *Savrip* suffers heavy damage from the *End of Days*, it's able to break through to assist the *Renegade's Blood* by destroying the *Flatline*.

The PCs should be allowed to dock with the *Renegade's Blood* before the *Flatline* is taken out of the battle by the *Savrip*. However, the mere approach of a large corvette bristling with turbolasers and swarming with *Cutlass-9* starfighters should give them cause for urgency. The GM should use the *Savrip*'s approach as a source of tension (as it is likely an insurmountable threat), especially if the PCs insist on running rampant during the course of the battle.

Once the *Savrip* removes the *StarVipers* from the picture, there are only four rounds remaining before the *Renegade's Blood*'s crew manages to get her engines, shields, and weapons back online. Such an event makes it hard to approach the Sorority's flagship, much less dock with it. The *Renegade's Blood* limps away while the *Savrip* and its fighters provide cover for the escape.

THE CONSORTIUM FLEET

The Consortium fleet was assembled with the sole, explicit intention of destroying the Sorority's ability to wage war in space. Quality was considered over quantity, and Tyber Zann spared no expense to ensure his enemies would pay dearly for their transgressions. Because of Zann's deep pockets and deeper thirst for vengeance, the Consortium flotilla is heavily-armed and quite formidable.

Commanded by Jerid Sykes, considered Zann's most trusted fleet officer, the Consortium fleet is expected—and commanded—to emerge victorious. Should any of the pirate vessels escape, Sykes has pledged to hunt them down no matter where they choose to hide. Zann's confidence in his fleet is absolute, and there is no question in his mind how the ensuing conflict will end.

Despite the deadliness of his ships and their crew, Zann's primary goal—outside of destroying the Veiled Sorority and claiming the Pirate Queen's mask—is to capture the Queen alive or, at the least, provide positive proof of her demise. Failure to capture her or provide unmitigated proof of her death is unacceptable to the crime lord under any circumstances.

JERID SYKES, CONSORTIUM ADMIRAL [NEMESIS]

Jerid Sykes, once a Republic fleet officer, cut his proverbial teeth during the Clone Wars. When the Republic dissolved into the Empire, Jerid constantly butted heads with the new class of officers who were commissioned due to their connections rather than their skill. His stubbornness eventually cost him his post, but it wasn't long before representatives of the Zann Consortium found him and offered him a lucrative career as one of its fleet officers. Having nothing more to lose, Jerid agreed.

Though he has adopted the Consortium's methods, Jerid doesn't consider himself a criminal. He views Tyber Zann as an honest man who refuses to sink to Imperial levels of deceit, and who instead proudly proclaims his intent to seize power for power's own sake. Such bluntness is a relief to Jerid after so many years in service to the Empire.

Jerid's personality is brusque and businesslike. He doesn't suffer incompetence from any of his crew, and he's been known to personally execute crew responsible for spectacular failures. He is dismayed by Zann's insistence on taking the Queen alive, and would prefer simply to blast her ship to atoms instead.

END OF DAYS

2	4	3	3	3	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	S. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
3	16	15	0	0	

Skills: Astrogation 3, Coercion 2, Cool 3, Discipline 3, Gunnery 3, Leadership 3, Piloting [Space] 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Survival 2.

Talents: Intimidating 2 (may suffer up to 2 strain to downgrade difficulty of Coercion checks, or upgrade difficulty when targeted by Coercion checks, by an equal number), Natural Pilot (may reroll any one Gunnery or Piloting [Space] check once per session).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Disruptor pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 10; Critical 2; Range [Short]; Vicious 4), officer's uniform, crash survival kit.

The *End of Days* is the Zann Consortium fleet's acting flagship in the engagement. Captained by Jerid Sykes, an ex-Imperial fleet officer, it is crewed by the Consortium's best officers and crew. The ship has a high status, and it has even served as Tyber Zann's personal transport on a number of occasions.

7	3	-1	2	2	2	2	8
SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEF. FORE/PORT/STARBOARD/AFT				ARMOR
			HT THRESHOLD				SS THRESHOLD
			100				60

Hull Type/Class: Cruiser/Keldabe.

Manufacturer: MandalMotors/Zann Consortium.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: Class 10.
Navicomputer: Yes.

Sensor Range: Long.

Ship's Complement: 6,000 crew.

Starfighter Complement: 36 starfighters.

Encumbrance Capacity: 8,000.



Passenger Capacity: 1,000 troops.

Consumables: 2 years.

Price/Rarity: 200,000,000 (R)/8.

Customization Hard Points: 4.

Weapons: Five dorsal, ten port, and ten starboard turret-mounted heavy turbolasers (Fire Arc All or Port or Starboard; Damage 11; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Breach 4, Slow-Firing 2).

Five ventral and five port and five starboard heavy ion cannons (Fire Arc All; Damage 7; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Slow-Firing 1, Ion).

Two forward-mounted mass driver missile launchers (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 14; Critical 3, Range [Extreme]; Blast 4, Breach 4, Inaccurate 1, Limited Ammo 10, Slow-Firing 2).

Five forward-mounted heavy tractor beam emitters (Fire Arc Forward; Damage —; Critical —; Range [Short]; Tractor 6).

ADDITIONAL RULES

Shield Energy Absorbers: The *Keldabe*-class cruiser has a set of unique shield absorption devices built into the hull. The technology is difficult to construct, takes up an inordinate amount of space, and can cause critical overloads in systems. However, it does give the cruiser a unique advantage in combat. The absorbers may be activated as a maneuver by one of the crew. Once they are activated, one target vessel within medium range reduces its defense rating on all facings to zero. The system can remain on indefinitely, but at the end of each round in which it has been operational, the cruiser suffers 4 system strain.

Massive 1: When making an attack targeting this starship, the critical rating of any weapons used counts as one higher.

FLATLINE AND BRILLIANCE

The *Flatline* and the *Brilliance* are both *Interceptor IV*-class frigates. They were included as heavy support for fighters from the *End of Days*, with a secondary mission of distracting the pirates' light freighters. Both have seen their share of combat for the Zann Consortium, and their crews are blooded veterans.



Hull Type/Class: Frigate/Interceptor IV.

Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 3, Backup: Class 20.

Navicomputer: Yes.

Sensor Range: Medium.

Ship's Complement: Twenty crew.

Encumbrance Capacity: 10,000.

Passenger Capacity: 5.

Consumables: Three months.

Price/Rarity: 300,000 credits/7.

Customization Hard Points: 4.

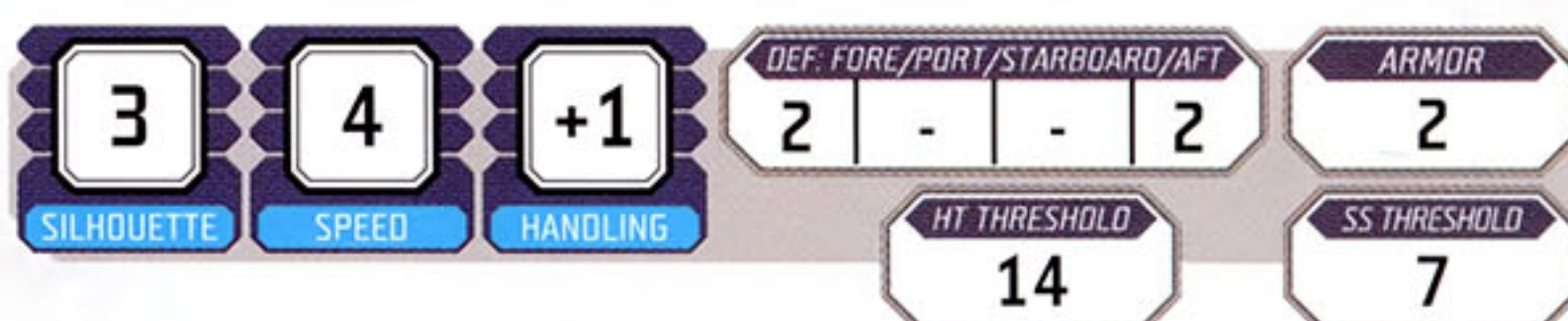
Weapons: One port and one starboard turbolaser cannon batteries (Fire Arc Port or Starboard; Damage 11; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Breach 4; Slow-Firing 2).

Forward-mounted concussion missile launcher (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Blast 4, Breach 4, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 3, Slow-Firing 2).

STARVIPER M-2

The StarViper M-2 is an aftermarket modification of the infamous MandalMotors space superiority starfighter. It possesses a distinctive profile, with four wings radiating from a central cockpit like the fins of a beautiful yet deadly ocean creature. Two "arms" extend from the cockpit, each holding a pair of weapons. The arms can swing forward and backward, enhancing targeting capability and even allowing the pilot to fire behind the ship.

The M-2 modification boasts improved versatility at the expense of raw killing power. The heavy laser cannons have been reduced in potency to save power for the StarViper's boosted shields, while still leaving the craft with a potent punch. More importantly, the proton torpedo launchers have been replaced with a pair of ion cannons, making the fighter popular among pirates and criminal consortiums.



Hull Type/Model: Starfighter/StarViper M-2.

Manufacturer: MandalMotors.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: None.

Navicomputer: Yes.

Sensor Range: Close.

Ship's Complement: One pilot.

Encumbrance Capacity: 12.

Passenger Capacity: 0.

Consumables: One week.

Price/Rarity: 160,000 credits/7.

Customization Hard Points: 0.

Weapons: Quad arm-mounted light laser cannons (Fire Arc All; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Close]; Linked 3).

Forward-mounted light ion cannons (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Close]; Ion).

ADDITIONAL RULES

Maneuvering Mode: As a maneuver, the pilot may switch into or out of maneuvering mode. When in maneuvering mode, the StarViper M-2 increases its speed and handling by 1. However, its arm-mounted light laser cannons change their Fire Arc to "Forward."

CONSORTIUM STARFIGHTER PILOT [RIVAL]

The Zann Consortium's fighter pilots are highly skilled and proud of their elite status. Though many are cocky and overconfident, they possess the talent to back up their bravado. They come from all genders, backgrounds, and species.

The Consortium starfighter pilots aboard the *End of Days* are part of Sabacc Squadron, otherwise known as the "Gamblers." Sabacc Squadron pilots are well known for their willingness to face and overcome incredible odds. Each has a callsign that corresponds to a face card from sabacc, such as "Endurance," "Demise," or "Star."



Skills: Astrogation 2, Computers 1, Discipline 2, Gunnery 2, Piloting (Space) 2, Ranged (Light) 1.

Talents: Natural Pilot (may reroll any one Gunnery or Piloting [Space] check once per session).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), flight suit with helmet, crash survival kit.

THE SORORITY FLEET

The Sorority's pirate fleet consists of six vessels and a squadron of modified *Cutlass-9* patrol fighters. Though scarred from previous battles, each of the Sorority's ships is well maintained and expertly crewed. Leading them is the *Renegade's Blood*, a heavily modified *Consular*-class light cruiser that serves as the Queen's flagship.

The remaining ships consist of freighters, most of which are prizes taken by the Sorority during raids. Unless the starships are specifically noted as being modified, use the freighters presented in the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook starting on page 260.

RENEGADE'S BLOOD

The *Renegade's Blood* is the Pirate Queen's flagship. The Queen has personally led each and every one of the recent sorties against the Zann Consortium, and the *Renegade's Blood* provides the bulk of the Veiled Sorority's firepower when capturing Consortium vessels. The exterior of the ship is painted the color of dried blood, and several Ubese kill marks adorn the armor nearest the ship's bridge. The interior has been heavily modified to better suit the Sorority's needs.

The *Renegade's Blood's* modifications include a reinforced shield generator, a dorsal-mounted heavy tractor beam cannon, and a high-output ion turbine.



Hull Type/Class: Light Cruiser/Consular.

Manufacturer: Corellian Engineering Corporation.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: Class 14.

Navicomputer: Yes.

Ship's Complement: One ship's captain, one pilot, one co-pilot, one navigator, one comms operator, four engineers.

Passenger Capacity: Up to 16, depending on the configuration.

Encumbrance Capacity: Up to 3,200 depending on configuration.

Consumables: Eight months.

Price/Rarity: 3,400,000 credits/5.

Sensor Range: Long.

Customization Hard Points: 3.

Weapons: Two forward turret-mounted twin heavy ion cannons (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard; Damage 7; Critical Hit 4; Range [Medium]; Ion, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

One port dorsal and one port ventral twin light turbolaser (Fire Arc Port; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Breach 2, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

One starboard dorsal and one starboard ventral twin light turbolaser (Fire Arc Starboard; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Breach 2, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

One dorsal turret-mounted heavy tractor beam projector (Fire Arc All; Damage –; Critical –; Range [Short]; Tractor 6).

CUSTOMIZATIONS

Engine Ring Stabilizer: +2 handling (this has already been factored into the *Renegade's Blood's* profile above). This occupies one of the ship's hard points.

High-Output Ion Turbine: +1 speed, –1 system strain threshold (this has already been factored into the *Renegade's Blood's* profile above). This occupies one of the ship's hard points.

Modified Advanced Targeting Array: When a character fires one of the *Renegade's Blood's* weapons, that character upgrades the ability of the Gunnery check twice. All mounted weapons have the innate talents Sniper Shot (before making a non-thrown ranged attack, may perform a Sniper Shot maneuver to increase the weapon's range by one range band per rank in Sniper Shot, upgrade the difficulty of the attack by one per range band increase). This occupies one of the ship's hard points.

SAVRIP

The oldest ship in the Sorority fleet, the *Savrip*, a *Marauder*-class assault corvette, was the pirate band's original flagship. Following the retirement of the prior Queen, Noira decided to change things up in a bid to shore up her power base.

Though the *Savrip* is no longer the Sorority's flagship, it is still the pirate fleet's heavy hitter. Not only does it carry the bulk of the Sorority's fighters, but it is also sent straight into the thick of battle and used to suppress enemy ships with its brutal combination of turbolaser and ion fire.

The *Savrip*'s hull is dull green and light brown in color, and stylized Mantellian Savrips are painted on its wings. In addition to its upgraded weapon systems, the *Savrip* is also equipped with an electronic countermeasures suite (see page 269 of the *EDGE OF THE EMPIRE* Core Rulebook).

SILHOUETTE	SPEED	HANDLING	DEF. FORE/PORT/STARBOARD/AFT	ARMOR
5	3	+0	1 1 1 1	5
			HT THRESHOLD	SS THRESHOLD
			65	35

Hull Type/Class: Corvette/Marauder.

Manufacturer: Republic Sienar Systems.

Hyperdrive: Primary: Class 2, Backup: None.

Navicomputer: Yes.

Sensor Range: Medium.

Ship's Complement: 120 officers, pilots, and crew.

Starfighter Complement: Twelve *Cutlass-9* patrol fighters.

Encumbrance Capacity: 175.

Passenger Capacity: 40 pirates.

Consumables: Three months.

Price/Rarity: Not available for sale (R)/5.

Customization Hard Points: 0.

Weapons: Four forward-mounted and four turret mounted light double turbolasers (Fire Arc Forward or All; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Breach 2, Linked 1, Slow-Firing 1).

Forward-mounted light tractor beam emitter (Fire Arc Forward; Damage —; Critical —; Range [Close]; Tractor 2).

Two forward mounted medium ion cannons (Fire Arc Forward; Damage 6; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Ion).



BRIDGE CREWS

As needed, the GM should use the following profile when ships in either fleet without a named commander open fire or need to engage in maneuvers. This officer can also be used as needed when inside the *Renegade's Blood* to represent other ship's personnel.

FLEET OFFICER [RIVAL]

2	4	3	3	2	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 2		W. THRESHOLD 10		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills: Astrogation 2, Computers 2, Discipline 3, Gunnery 2, Piloting (Space) 2, Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), comlink, uniform.

THE EYE OF UBA

The *Eye of Uba* is a modified ILH-KK *Citadel*-class light freighter that is primarily used as a boarding craft by the Veiled Sorority. As such, the vessel's cargo capacity has been replaced by additional seating for pirate boarding parties. Though not particularly comfortable

at any time, let alone when filled to capacity, *The Eye of Uba* has nonetheless endeared itself to the Sorority's pirates, who consider it to be a "lucky" ship.

The Eye of Uba is painted black to mask its silhouette against the dark background of deep space. The freighter is based on the profile found on page 261 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

ROTTEN CORE

The *Rotten Core* is a YT-2400 light freighter the Sorority uses as a heavy weapons platform and scout craft. Because of its near-stock load-out and lack of distinguishing markings, the *Core* (as it's referred to by the pirates) is used for surreptitious shipment of loot or individuals to any planet in the galaxy.

The *Rotten Core* is identical to the YT-2400 light freighter described on page 265 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook. It has been modified, though, so that it can broadcast a number of forged identification codes in order to disguise its true identity.

VANITY'S PRICE AND CENSURE

Both the *Vanity's Price* and the *Censure* are modified Action VI bulk transports that the Sorority captured from the Zann Consortium. They are unarmed, and used primarily to carry plundered cargo. Each is manned by a skeleton crew of inexperienced pirates.

If statistics are required during the battle for either the *Vanity's Price* or the *Censure*, use those listed on page 260 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

WELCOMING PARTY

Docking with a *Consular*-class cruiser under optimal—and peaceful—conditions is a simple matter. With the vessel drifting and spiraling like a dead fish, however, the PCs have their work cut out for them. In order to complete the docking maneuver, the PCs' pilot must succeed on a **Hard (◆◆◆) Piloting check**. The Game Master should upgrade the difficulty of the check a number of times equal to the speed value of the PCs' ship (for example, if the PCs are traveling at speed 3, the difficulty would be upgraded three times). If the check fails, the pilot is unable to make a solid connection with the *Renegade's Blood*. Every ☹ generated along with a failed check, though, adds ☐ to the next attempt. Conversely, the PCs' ship takes 1 point of hull trauma for each ☹ generated as

the two ships grind together. A ☹ result causes their ships to have a minor collision (see page 242 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook).

Once they have successfully locked onto the enemy's docking ring, the Player Characters must take the perilous step of traversing the airlock and forcing entry into the enemy ship. The airlock is obviously sealed, and the PCs must force it open with a **Hard (◆◆◆) Computers check**. The artificial gravity shifts midway through the airlock chamber, forcing all PCs to succeed on an **Average (◆◆) Coordination check** to maintain their footing. Failure results in the PC dropping prone, and each ☹ generated on a failed check results in a wound.



Player Characters would be familiar enough with the depths of space to know the value of breath masks at the least, or better still, space suits. Wise or cautious PCs might add glow rods or fusion lanterns, utility belts, and even climbing gear to their packs.

The Sorority pirates aboard the *Renegade's Blood* are expecting the Consortium to board their ship. Fortunately for the PCs, the lack of power and ionized controls have put the ship in complete disarray. Only a handful of defenders have managed to make it to the airlock's entrance, and those who have are shaken and battered from the beating their ship has taken.

When the PCs open the hatch into the *Renegade's Blood*, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The hatch cracks open with an audible hiss, revealing a lightless chamber. The scent of burning electronics and stale, dirty air fills your nostrils, and an alarm blares in the distance. As you decide what to do, a rough voice from inside the Renegade's Blood shouts, "Let 'em have it!"

Several blasters fill the air with red bolts of energy, most of which strike the airlock door and the wall that surrounds it. The Sorority knows you're here, and the pirates are not about to give up without a fight.

Four Sorority pirates (fighting in two groups of two) crouch in the darkness of the entryway beyond the airlock hatch, their weapons trained on the PCs. Due to the backlighting that silhouettes the PCs from behind, the pirates gain to any attacks they make against the PCs, as long as the PCs are in the airlock itself. This bonus no longer applies to shots fired at PCs who have made their way inside the entryway and moved away from the airlock.

To make matters more interesting, only one PC can emerge through the airlock at a time. Firing from the airlock, through allies, and at the pirates in the entryway is a difficult task and PCs attempting this suffer on their ranged combat checks.

Additionally, outside of the light created by the pirates' muzzle flashes, the entryway is without illumination of any kind. Any PC firing at the pirates in the entryway, and any pirate attempting to shoot a PC who has moved out of the airlock, suffers due to darkness. Providing additional light sources, such as glow rods or the like, removes this penalty.

SORORITY DEFENDER [MINION]

The defenders on the *Renegade's Blood* are typical Sorority muscle. While other crew can serve in combat roles when required, these pirates act primarily as guards and security.



Skills (group only): Ranged (Light), Melee, Vigilance.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibroknife (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), padded armor (+2 soak), breath mask.

BRIDGING THE GAP

With the first Sorority defenders dispatched, the PCs must make their way to the bridge of the *Renegade's Blood*. Within a few minutes of the PCs' boarding the light cruiser and defeating their assailants, the sounds of the near-constant ion barrage subside. Equipment and systems slowly begin to hum back to life, and after a short while, some of the lights actually flicker on to reveal the ship's cluttered interior.

Rather than present the Game Master with a linear series of scripted encounters punctuated by repetitive gunfights in narrow hallways, this section provides several individual hazards and encounters that can be used—or not used—in any order the GM likes. Additional encounters can (and should) be introduced at the GM's whim. In the end, it's up to the Game Master how long the PCs spend making their way through the hobbled *Renegade's Blood* in search of the ship's bridge and their prize, the Queen. The GM should keep the tension high, though, with explosions rocking the ship, coolant lines venting into walkways, alerts shouted over loudspeakers, and other signs the vessel is in distress and that time is of the essence.

Each encounter and hazard is different from the others, and each one offers a new challenge that must be overcome before the PCs can proceed. Some challenges may be insurmountable for some PCs, depending on their abilities and equipment. Game Masters should present them with problems they can reasonably overcome, or otherwise provide them with an opportunity to locate tools that give them a fighting chance. The GM should also feel free to create new problems as desired as well to add unique dangers specific to the PCs' areas of expertise or backgrounds.

TAKING THE LONG ROUTE

The encounters presented here represent the most accessible path the PCs can choose to take to the bridge. Should they become stymied or unable to progress, they can attempt to find another way around an obstacle or encounter. Doing so shouldn't be easy, and requires a **Hard (◆◆◆) Perception check** or an **Average (◆◆) Knowledge (Education) check**. Successful checks allow the PCs to find a way around, though they might still encounter resistance on the way.

If either of these checks fails, the Player Characters are lost for several minutes while they attempt to get their bearings. The GM should keep track of any ☒ generated during these checks. If the PCs accumulate five ☒ results, they encounter a group of two Sorority defenders, with an additional defender added for each ☒ accumulated past five. When the encounter with the defenders is resolved, the accumulated ☒ is expended and the tally begins anew.

ABANDON SHIP

Moving through the treacherous ship brings the PCs to a compartment that has been converted to a storage room. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The ship rocks slightly as another laser blast impacts its hull, and a muttered curse from up ahead tells you that you're not alone. You stop for a moment, watching as three pirates in space suits approach your end of the compartment. One, obviously the leader, barks at the other two, who are carrying a large hard-sided case between them. "Hurry it up, sleemo!" As the words leave his lips, one of his companions glances past him and meets your gaze. "Uh, Turli," he says, dropping his end of the case, "We gots trouble!"

These pirates have decided for themselves that the battle is lost, and that remaining aboard the *Renegade's Blood* is a big mistake. They've collected some loot—their fair share, they insist—and are making their way to the nearest escape pod so they can put the Sorority behind them. Unfortunately for them, the PCs are blocking their way off the ship.

After dropping the hard-sided case, the three pirates draw their pistols and scramble for cover. They aren't planning on dying today, and if the PCs kill or

disable one of them, they throw down their arms and surrender. The PCs don't have time to deal with prisoners. Letting the pirates go won't have a negative effect on the Player Characters, one way or the other, and their escape pod is liable to be destroyed by the Consortium, anyway.

Regardless of what the PCs decide to do with them, the pirates' case is filled with objects, equipment, and spice worth 8,000 credits. Unfortunately, it's heavy and unwieldy (encumbrance at least 12), and only slows them down if they attempt to take it with them. Portions can be taken by individual PCs, but each such portion is worth only 500 credits.

The three pirates use the same statistics as the Sorority Defenders on page 85.

DAMAGE CONTROL

Despite the incredible damage the *Renegade's Blood* has suffered, there are still engineers aboard who are doing their best to patch things up while they still can. Unfortunately, one group of these engineers—working frantically to repair one of the ship's critical systems—labors right in the PCs' path to the bridge.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the PCs approach the pirate engineers' position:

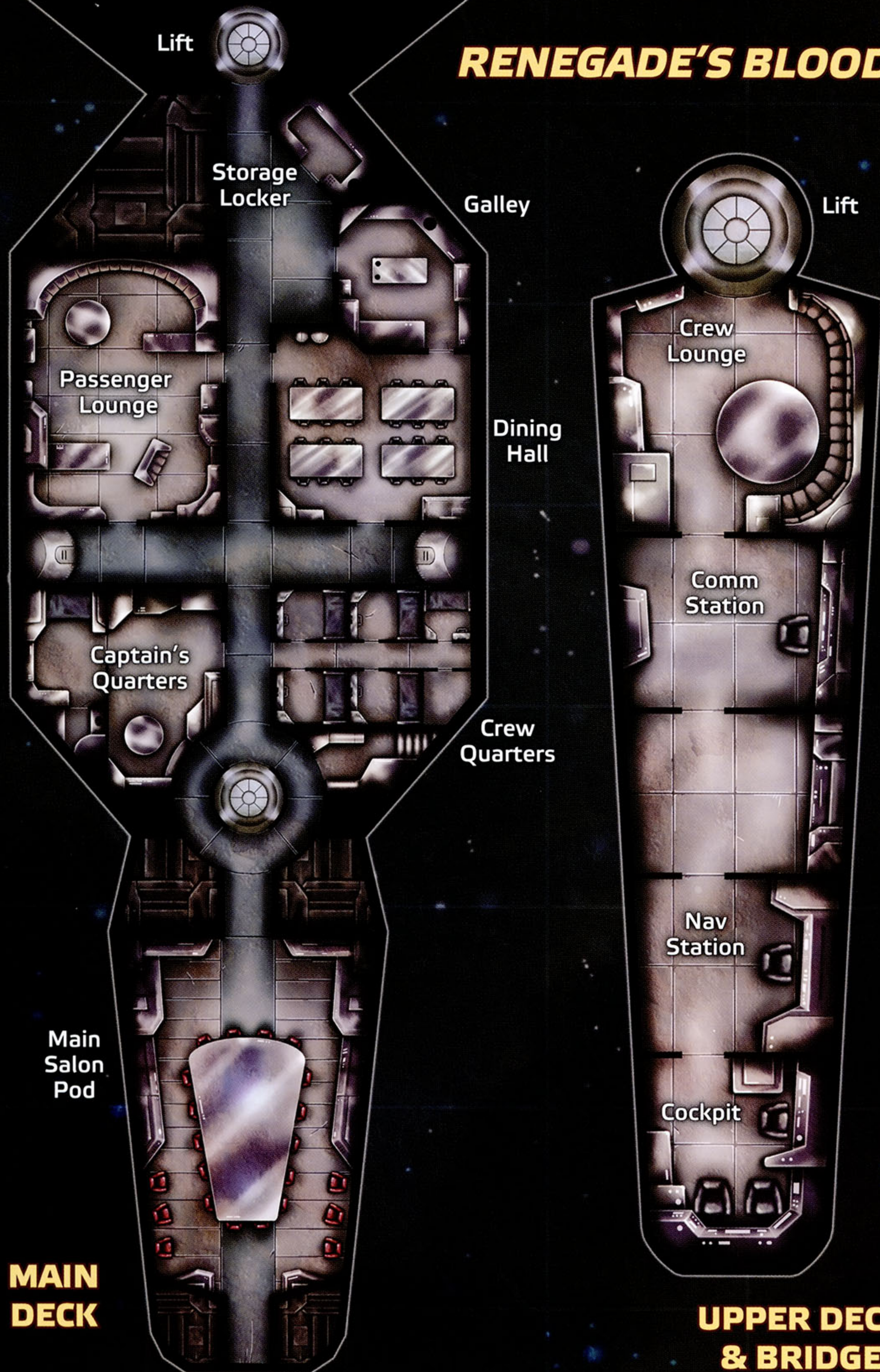
The Renegade's Blood continues to sway beneath the firepower amassed against it. As it rocks from another blast, a voice up ahead curses. "E chu ta! How're we supposed to put this bucket back together if they keep shootin' holes through us?"

"Stop whinin'," another voice replies. "If we can get the shields back online, we'll be on our way."

Peeking around a corner, you see four humanoids in grease-stained overalls working diligently on a number of exposed panels. Engrossed in their work, they don't see you yet. You could just as easily sneak by as ambush them.

The four engineers continue working on repairing the ship if left undisturbed, though there is still a chance they might hear any PCs who try to slip silently past them. Each sneaking PC must attempt an **Average (◆◆) Stealth check** to avoid detection. Failure by any of the PCs results in the engineers' noticing them before they can either sneak away or get into a good ambush position. If defeated, the Sorority engineers possess enough tools between them to assemble two complete tool kits.

RENEGADE'S BLOOD



SORORITY ENGINEER [MINION]

The Sorority's engineers maintain their ships' systems and ensure they remain functional even under the most trying conditions. They're well aware that their own survival hinges on whether they can repair enough of their ship's systems for it to either flee or compete with their attackers.

The engineers on the *Renegade's Blood* consist of two humans (one male, one female), a male Sullustan, and a female Duros. They wear coveralls, utility belts festooned with tools, and breath masks. Two of them have blaster pistols, while the other two engineers wield heavy hydrospanners. If forced into combat, they fight in two groups, one with the pistols and the others with the hydrospanners.

3	2	3	2	2	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE	W. THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE			
3	3	0	0		

Skills (group only): Computers, Mechanics, Melee, Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.


Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), heavy hydrospanner (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2), utility belt, breath mask, sealed coveralls, glow rod, tool kit.

BREACHED COMPARTMENT

As the PCs continue their trek to the ship's bridge, their dangerous path leads them to a sealed hatchway. Lights and readouts near the hatch's panel indicate that the chamber beyond it is exposed to the vacuum of deep space. Emergency magnetic fields in the doorway (as well as at other access points) allow the hatch to be opened without compromising the atmosphere in the rest of the vessel, but they don't hold back the empty death of the void.

The quickest way to get past the breached compartment is for the PCs to enter it through the open hatch's magnetic field and reach the compartment's exit on the other side. Unfortunately, this method requires that they have space suits (or some equivalent protection) if they intend to withstand the rigors of a hard vacuum (see page 214 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook). Droids and some alien species may be able to traverse the chamber without protective equipment.

Unprepared PCs who lack protective gear can attempt to locate some in adjoining compartments, as there are emergency lockers stocked with such equipment throughout the ship. Finding such a locker requires an **Average (◆◆) Perception check**. Should the check fail, no locker is found. Two or more  generated on a successful check locates a locker, but it is locked.

Bypassing the lock requires an **Average (◆◆) Skulduggery check**. Each locker found can contain one or more of the following: a single space suit, a breath mask, a hull sealant canister, an emergency medpac, and a glow rod.

Given the presence of hull sealant canisters in the ship's emergency lockers, some PCs may attempt to patch the hull breach and cycle in fresh air, allowing unprotected individuals to enter the room without risk of harm. Doing so requires them to locate the hull breach and patch it somehow, assuming it isn't too large to repair. The breach should be roughly eight centimeters in diameter, but the GM should adjust the size (and number of breaches) to best match the pace of the adventure and the PCs' style of play.

HULL SEALANT CANISTERS

As indicated by their name, hull sealant canisters contain hull sealant. The sealant is under pressure, and can be applied to small gaps or cracks in a ship's hull to prevent air loss due to vacuum. Doing so requires a successful **Mechanics check**, the difficulty of which depends on the size of the hole. Holes larger than three centimeters in diameter also require additional material, such as a piece of metal or ceramic plating that can be secured in place with hull sealant.

A canister of hull sealant costs 100 credits, and has an encumbrance value of 1 and a rarity of 2.

HULL SEALANT DIFFICULTIES

- ◆: Tiny but noticeable punctures in the hull.
- ◆◆: Breaches in the hull of up to three centimeters in diameter.
- ◆◆◆: Breaches in the hull of up to six centimeters in diameter.
- ◆◆◆◆: Breaches in the hull up to ten centimeters in diameter.
- ◆◆◆◆◆: Hull ruptures up to .5 meters.

In addition, several dead pirates are present in the compartment, and some of them are wearing space suits. The occupied space suits can be fetched by the PCs, emptied of their contents, and patched or repaired if necessary so that other Player Characters can wear them. Of course, wise PCs check the suits thoroughly to ensure they haven't been punctured or otherwise compromised. The GM can have suits be damaged as desired, something the PCs can notice with an **Average (◆ ◆) Perception check** or **Easy (◆) Mechanics check**. Hull sealant can be used to repair any suit breaches, as per the **Hull Sealant Canisters** sidebar on page 88.

Once the PCs are inside the exposed compartment, other dangers can (and should) be present. Pirate crew working to repair damage are likely, as are mynocks that have entered the ship through a particularly large hull breach. Mynocks are detailed on page 413 of the **EDGE OF THE EMPIRE** Core Rulebook.

SORORITY CREW [MINION]

The crew who staff the Sorority's ships are all experienced pirates. Though they aren't usually called upon to participate in boarding operations, they are expected to defend their ships to the best of their ability when enemies successfully attack. The vast majority of these individuals are unarmed unless previously equipped with blasters by their individual quartermasters, which is typically only done if their ship is expected to be boarded. As the Consortium counterattack was unexpected, most of them will not have blasters.

2	3	3	2	2	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 2		W. THRESHOLD 3		M/R DEFENSE 0 0	

Skills (group only): Computers, Gunnery, Mechanics, Melee, Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Vibroknife (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 1), utility belt, breath mask or space suit, glow rod, tool kit.

MANTELLIAN MAYHEM

Not all the Sorority pirates are members of civilized species. In fact, the Pirate Queen is known to keep a number of Mantellian Savrips on her crew rosters, for impressive onboard security and a great deal of extra muscle during boarding operations. Here, the PCs are unlucky enough to encounter one such Savrip guarding a door they very much need to open.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

As you pick your way through all manner of debris, including a number of bodies, you round a corner only to see a large creature with a snake-like head atop its massive body—a Mantellian Savrip! The creature, standing ten meters away in front of a sealed hatch in the cramped (for it) walkway, narrows its eyes at you before unleashing a deafening battle cry. It raises the largest vibro-axe you've ever seen and charges.

The Savrip, named Warg, is one of the Queen's praetorians, an elite guard trained to respond only to her commands. Given a lack of communication with his mistress, the Savrip has decided to remain at his last post until the Queen orders him to do otherwise. Though the creature isn't certain what all the commotion is about, he's smart enough to understand that the vessel is under attack.

WARG, SAVRIP GUARD [NEMESIS]

Warg has served the Queen aboard her starship for as long as he can remember. The ship's cramped quarters used to bother him, but these days he doesn't possess a coherent memory of anything else. Though he isn't fond of guard duty, Warg considers himself to be very good at standing in one place for a long time. The only thing that might improve his day is something—ideally someone—to smash.

Warg wears a suit of laminate armor made just for him, and he carries a massive vibro-axe that the Queen gave him as a present.

5	3	1	3	3	2
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 7		W. THRESHOLD 24		S. THRESHOLD 8	
				M/R DEFENSE 1 1	

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Melee 3, Resilience 3, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Durable 2 (subtract 20 from Critical Injury rolls made against the Savrip), Frenzied Attack 1 (suffer 1 strain to upgrade ability of a Melee or Brawl combat check once).

Abilities: Berserk Rage (when a Savrip has suffered any wounds, he deals +1 damage to Brawl and Melee attacks; when Critically Injured, he instead deals +2 damage to Brawl and Melee attacks).

Equipment: Massive vibro-axe (Melee; Damage 9; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Cumbersome 4, Pierce 2, Sunder, Vicious 3), laminate armor (+2 soak).

A BRIDGE TOO FAR

After somehow making it to the bridge of the *Renegade's Blood* in one piece, the PCs should be ready to tackle their final objective—the capture of the Pirate Queen. As soon as the heavy blast doors to the bridge are opened (requiring a **Hard** [◆ ◆] **Computers** or **Skulduggery** check), the PCs are met by a flurry of blaster fire from a handful of the Queen's elite bridge guards.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The blast door cycles into the floor and ceiling of the corridor, revealing the bridge of the Renegade's Blood. Red lights flicker, and a number of bodies can be seen lying amid the carnage of the different bridge compartments. Whimpers and moans come from the wounded, while urgent voices call out updates and warnings as the battle rages on outside. Suddenly, a blaster bolt ricochets off the wall, barely missing you. "We've got company!" a tense female voice warns.

This is the opening salvo of the Queen's first (and final) confrontation with the PCs. A small group of bridge crew and two minion groups of three Sorority bridge guards are attempting to do their jobs as the ship falls apart around them (the Game Master should modify the number of guards as needed for this encounter to be challenging). The enigmatic Queen Noira is also here, having taken cover within the cockpit. She uses her pistol when required, but her skill is hardly exemplary as personal charm and shrewd negotiation are her main weapons.

The remaining members of the bridge crew remain at their stations, doing their best to steer the ship away from the fray. They continue to do so unless attacked by the PCs, in which case they defend themselves; use the profile for Sorority Crew, on page 89, as needed. The bridge is filled with terminals, collapsed struts, and other debris to provide plenty of cover for the defenders as well.

BRIDGE GUARD [MINION]

Outside of the Savrips that make up the Queen's praetorians, the guards maintaining security on the bridge are her most trusted and capable troops. They are steadfast and loyal, and they have pledged to give their lives in her defense.

Each of the bridge guards wears a special grey armored uniform with black trim, and a plain black mask that also functions as a pair of scanner goggles.





Skills (group only): Ranged (Light), Melee.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Heavy blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), vibrosword (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 1), heavy battle armor (+1 defense, +2 soak), mask.


NOIRA, PIRATE QUEEN [NEMESIS]


Noira is an Ubese female in her mid-forties, with pale skin and piercing blue eyes that swirl like liquid behind her platinum mask. Her hair is shoulder-length and ebony, and she wears a sharp uniform that adds even more to her air of command. As an Ubese, Noira wears a discreet breath mask that supplies her with the atmosphere mixture she requires to survive. She keeps a blaster at her side and is proficient with her vibrorapier. Her true weapon, though, is her charm.

Under the circumstances, Noira is more interested in survival than combat. Things have gone poorly, and even if she survives the Consortium's ambush, her credibility within the Veiled Sorority has been completely shattered. In fact, it's unlikely she'll be the Queen for much longer, and she knows it.



Skills: Charm 4, Coercion 3, Cool 5, Deception 4, Knowledge (Underworld) 3, Leadership 5, Melee 3, Negotiation 4, Ranged (Light) 2, Streetwise 4.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade the difficulty of any combat check targeting this character twice), Command 2 (gain  when making Leadership checks per rank of Command), Steely Nerves (may spend a Destiny Point to ignore the effects of ongoing Critical Injuries on any Presence or Willpower-related checks).

Abilities: Awe-inspiring (Noira is such an awe-inspiring figure that anyone attempting to attack her suffers a  to their check unless they spend a Destiny Point; use of the Destiny Point for this purpose makes the character in question immune from this ability).

Equipment: Light blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), armored uniform (+1 soak), vibrorapier (Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Pierce 5), ornate armor (+2 soak), Pirate Queen's mask, breath mask.

DEFEAT AND DEATH

Once the boarding party kills or stuns three of her five guards, Noira orders the remaining pair to cease fire. She remains sheltered in the cockpit unless she was forced to move to another location by one of the Player Characters. Her voice, the familiar soft whisper that is both beautiful and haunting, calls out to the PCs for parley.

If the Player Characters allow Noira to speak her mind, she presents her case from her current hiding place. After all, she isn't foolish enough to expose herself to the group that has almost singlehandedly brought down the Veiled Sorority. *"I can hardly believe what we have come to,"* she says. *"I may have been foolish to have doubted Zann's resolve, but I was certainly wrong to have doubted your abilities. For that, I offer my humblest apologies."*


Even if other pleasantries are exchanged, Noira then continues with her speech. *"The Veiled Sorority is a wealthy organization. I would be willing to share its wealth with you should you choose to turn your back on Zann's criminal empire and join mine. We are but moments from escape, and unlike the treacherous Tyber Zann, I will never betray you."*

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'YES'?"

Being capricious, as Player Characters often are, they might choose to accept Noira's offer. While this takes the adventure off the rails, so to speak, the Game Master should be willing to go with the flow. After all, the adventure still concludes, the PCs are able to assist with Noira's escape, and a galaxy of further stories still awaits.

As a result, they'll be wanted by the Zann Consortium once it's discovered that they've broken their contract and joined Tyber Zann's bitter enemy, but at least they'll be in good company. It's possible that the PCs have their own plans, too. Perhaps their schemes involve taking the Queen's mask for themselves in order to exert control over the Sorority.

This latter plan, while ambitious, is fraught with greater peril still. As explained later, Noira's failure has been catastrophic, and she—or anyone assuming her identity—will have to fight tooth and nail in order to maintain control of the Veiled Sorority, on top of managing the conflict with the Consortium. Venlana Sipal, for one, swears vengeance against the PCs as soon as she hears of the turnover at the Paradise (see page 92).



If her offer is declined, violently or otherwise, Noira expresses her disappointment. *"Our reign could have been glorious, friends. You force my hand with your refusal."* With that, she draws her vibrorapier and leads her remaining guards in a desperate attack. She is quite deadly in close combat, and should prove a dangerous opponent for the PCs. Her aim is to hold off the PCs so she can make her way to a nearby hatchway leading down to an escape pod.

This final battle should rage across what is left of the bridge, as the *Renegade's Blood* shudders around the fighters. Various bridge stations might suddenly burst into fire or explode, making for a suitably cinematic climax. The Pirate Queen fights to the last, but is likely outmatched at this point. Once she is incapacitated, before collapsing unconscious Noira turns to the PCs and drops her rapier in defeat.

"And so our game of cat and mouse ends," she whispers, her voice weary. *"So be it, but do not expect me to go willingly to one of Zann's torture chambers. Such is not my fate."*

With that, her eyes flutter behind her mask and she falls to the deck. Player Characters who succeed on an **Average (◆ ◆) Medicine check** can discern that Noira is suffering from the effects of some kind of virulent poison. If questioned, she opens her eyes. *"Implanted toxin sac. Zann can have my ashes,"* she explains before losing consciousness.

The PCs can attempt to save the Queen's life by making a **Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆) Medicine check**. In the case of a failure, Noira's life slips away quietly. Any level of success forestalls her death for ten minutes, plus an additional five minutes per 🌀, but unless a Player Character (or Sykes) quickly purges her of the poison in a fully functioning sick bay or medcenter on one of the Consortium ships, she won't survive the ravages of the custom neurotoxin that courses through her veins.

On a brighter note, the Pirate Queen's defeat allows the Player Characters to finally claim her mask in the name of the Zann Consortium and provide the critical proof of her death. Should she be saved from her own attempt at suicide, Noira informs the PCs that the mask was Tyber Zann's goal all along. The Consortium had planned to supplant Noira with an impostor, using her mask to disguise her true identity from the rest of the Sorority. Unfortunately for Zann, the attempt failed and sparked off a feud between the two organizations. Should the Queen die without imparting this story to the PCs, the Game Master should feel free to engineer some other method for them to learn about it after the fact.

THE BATTLE ENDS

Once the PCs have defeated the last of the bridge guards and finally brought down the Queen, they can take control of the ship's bridge and open a comm channel to Jerid Sykes. Sykes is surprised by their success, but congratulates them nonetheless. After a few moments of awkward compliments, Sykes offers to send a boarding party over to clear the *Renegade's Blood* of any remaining pirates.

Once the Consortium flotilla has finished mopping up (or the remaining Sorority vessels have escaped into hyperspace), Sykes orders every surviving Sorority pirate executed and ejected into deep space. He gives the order just as he might request an ale in a local cantina, and he shows no hesitation or remorse for it. Always a good host, he offers to let the PCs assist his crew in "taking out the trash." It's up to them if they want to participate in such gruesome business.

As their presence is no longer required, they are free to board their vessel and return to Saleucami in order to conclude their business and—finally—be paid for the contract.

CONTRACT FULFILLED

The return trip to Saleucami is uneventful unless the GM wishes to explore other encounters or plot points. Once they've touched down in Taleucema, the PCs are summoned back to the Paradise one last time by Porel, Venlana's Twi'lek assistant. Like Venlana, Porel refuses to discuss anything of consequence over an open comm line. He insists the PCs rendezvous with him at the cantina so that he can dole out payment and complete their contract.

The Paradise is much as the Player Characters remember it, though it is hardly as crowded as it was the last time. Porel meets them at the door and leads

them into the conference room as he has in the past. Venlana, sitting in her chair at the conference table, smiles broadly when the PCs enter. *"Welcome back, and congratulations on a job well done,"* she tells them. *"Now we can sort out your compensation and put this contract to rest. But first... the Pirate Queen's mask, if you please."*

Once the PCs produce the mask, Porel extends his hand to receive it. As he does so, Venlana interrupts, *"I don't think so, Porel. Tyber Zann wouldn't appreciate the hands of a traitor touching his prize."*

Porel stops in his tracks, but he seems unsurprised by Venlana's revelation. *"It was only a matter of time until your duplicity came to light, Venlana,"* he says.

"My duplicity?" she answers incredulously. *"You've been at the Sorority's beck and call all along!"* Glancing at the PCs, Venlana nods to Porel. *"My friends, you have one last target before your contract is fulfilled. Kill this scum, and I will see your pay doubled!"*

Porel doesn't take Venlana's threat sitting down. *"Tyber Zann has suspected Venlana's treachery for some time now,"* he tells the PCs. *"Now, we have our proof. The Consortium will reward you well if you can capture this Pantoran harpy alive."*

Both Venlana and Porel exude conviction, but it's up to the PCs to decide which one to support. The truth—which may appear obvious—is that Venlana is the Sorority mole, while Porel has been loyal. In fact, he was assigned to Venlana in order to keep an eye on her. PCs wishing to discern truth from lies can attempt an **opposed Hard (♦♦♦) Discipline check** to see through her deception. Porel is not attempting to deceive the PCs, so he appears to believe what he is saying. GMs wishing to maintain ambiguity can allow the PCs to attempt a **Hard (♦♦♦) Discipline check**. Whether they succeed or fail, Porel seems to be telling the truth.

If the PCs side with Venlana against Porel, he attempts to escape through the Paradise, defending himself as necessary. He's a shrewd combatant, but it isn't his intention to kill anyone. Rather, he needs to report his findings to the Consortium, and he kills only as a last resort.

POREL VAKRA, ZANN CONSORTIUM UNDERBOSS [NEMESIS]

Given that Porel has been a Consortium member for nearly fifteen years, many are surprised that he hasn't advanced higher in the ranks. The truth is, he enjoys being where he is, and he has proven himself to be a loyal member of the Zann Consortium time and time again.

Porel is a perpetually stoic Twi'lek, both in his manner and his speech. He dresses conservatively, favoring tailored suits that conceal his hidden pistol. Based on his plain appearance, many people underestimate him—often to their painful detriment.

3 BRAWN	3 AGILITY	3 INTELLECT	3 CUNNING	4 WILLPOWER	2 PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 4	W. THRESHOLD 16	S. THRESHOLD 18	M/R DEFENSE 0 0		

Skills: Brawl 3, Coercion 2, Cool 3, Knowledge (Underworld) 3, Negotiation 2, Perception 3, Ranged (Light) 3, Streetwise 3.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade the difficulty of any combat check targeting this character once), Dodge 1 (perform Dodge incidental to suffer 1 strain to upgrade the difficulty of an enemy's combat check once), Point Blank 2 (adds +2 damage to one hit of successful Ranged [Light] attacks made at short range or engaged).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Blaster pistol (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Stun setting), holdout blaster pistol with superior weapon customization (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Stun setting, Superior), armored suit (+1 soak), com-link, datapad.



If, on the other hand, the PCs side with Porel, Venlana raises her hands and gives up without a struggle. Unless silenced somehow, she threatens Porel and the PCs, and continues to do so until she's taken away. *"You'll be sorry, you idiots," she snarls. "When Tyber Zann hears of this, he'll have you all killed."*

VENLANA VICTORIOUS

Cullible or treacherous Player Characters may, for whatever reason, choose to side with Venlana. If this happens, and they succeed in killing Porel, she is happy to tap the Zann Consortium funds at her disposal and double their contract, as agreed, once she has the mask of the Pirate Queen in her possession. She then thanks them for their help and takes her leave, intimating that she must get the mask to Tyber Zann at once.

Whether or not Porel escapes, it's only a matter of time until the Zann Consortium figures out what's happened. Zann, in a rage, hires a plethora of bounty hunters to find Venlana and the PCs. While he insists that Venlana be captured alive, Zann specifies no such treatment for the PCs. Regardless of how they deal with their pursuit, the Player Characters should have an exciting, if dangerous, time.

Venlana herself disappears. A few months later, however, the Veiled Sorority returns to the spacelanes, targeting legitimate shipping rather than singling out Consortium convoys. Is the new Pirate Queen Venlana behind the mask? Or has the Sorority chosen a new leader? Curious PCs may choose to investigate, but who knows what they will discover?

Porel thanks the PCs for their loyalty and calls a group of Consortium thugs who come and take Venlana away. She continues to profess her innocence until she's out of earshot, but neither Porel nor the thugs seem to care. As a symbol of his appreciation, Porel gives the PCs an extra 1,000 credit bonus, in addition to any other bonuses they've earned.

If questioned further about Venlana, Porel explains that Venlana was a Sorority mole all along. Though he'd suspected her duplicity for some time, he was required to accumulate evidence that proved her guilt beyond a shadow of a doubt. Given the great care that Venlana took to disguise her associations with the Sorority, scraping together a convincing case was quite difficult until she revealed herself.

EPISODE III XP REWARDS

Standard experience point rewards for **Episode III**:

- Helping JR-12 if it was damaged by the Sorority saboteurs: 5 XP
- Shooting down one or more Sorority spacecraft during the battle: 5 XP
- Overcoming the Sorority bridge crew and defeating Queen Noira: 5–10 XP
- Preventing the toxin from killing Noira: 5 XP
- Capturing Venlana on Porel's behalf: 5 XP
- Additional encounters: 5 XP

As always, the GM should award bonus XP for good roleplaying and engaging with the PCs' Motivations and Obligations.

WHAT NEXT?

By the end of **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the PCs should have successfully completed their increasingly intricate contract with the Zann Consortium and brought both Queen Noira and Venlana Sipal to an end. Enterprising or unlucky parties may have made quite a mess of things, joined the enemy, or otherwise angered their employer, and may now be on the run from Tyber Zann's cutthroats. In either case, there are plenty of springboards available to Game Masters looking to keep the players involved.

ONE GOOD JOB DESERVES ANOTHER

The Zann Consortium is always looking for talented operators, skilled criminals, and competent ne'er-do-wells to fill its ranks. If the PCs have done a flawless job—or even an admirable one—Porel asks them to join the Zann Consortium. The Consortium can provide unscrupulous PCs with countless opportunities to earn money at the expense of less fortunate inhabitants of the Outer Rim.

Of course, membership in the Zann Consortium has its price. Not only do Consortium employees have very little choice in the jobs they are assigned—and refusal approaches failure—but they are forever under the watchful eye of Tyber Zann and his cronies. Dark deeds, guilt, and near-constant paranoia follow them through every hyperspace jump. While such pursuits offer an exhilarating rush of income and excitement, the pleasure fades once the dubious charm of organized crime has worn off, and all the credits in the galaxy don't buy peace of mind.

Careers in a powerful criminal organization are often lifelong, and Tyber Zann appreciates the simplicity and efficiency of making sure Consortium careers are *exactly* lifelong. Attempting to leave the organization for any reason whatsoever results in a kill order being issued for the PCs. Though silver-tongued PCs may be able to talk their way out of other criminal obligations, the Consortium continues to consider them security risks—loose ends to be tied off.

Even if the PCs refuse membership in the Zann Consortium, Porel has plenty for them to do as freelancers. Though Venlana was taken away by Consortium thugs, news surfaces a few days later that she has escaped from her captors and is on the loose. Porel asks the PCs, given their familiarity with Venlana, to pursue her in exchange for another handsome bounty.

EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES

The Consortium mercilessly hunts PCs who betray, fail, or attempt to deceive their former employer. In Tyber Zann's eyes, anyone who is brave or foolish enough to cross him diminishes the Consortium's reputation, and must be eradicated at all costs. There can be no forgiveness from such a tyrant; crossing him could even result in each PC gaining a Bounty Obligation.

DEFECTION

If the PCs joined or took over the Veiled Sorority, the Zann Consortium's bounty hunters still hound them across the galaxy. The difference, however, is that the PCs aren't alone, and have the Sorority's pirates, facilities, and resources to call on...eventually. After all, the pirates don't trust anyone, especially Consortium turncoats, until they've suitably proved themselves.

The Player Characters have choices, depending on when they defected to the Sorority. If they joined on Ord Mantell, they may very well be able to experience the remainder of this adventure from the other side of the fence. If they agreed to join the Queen aboard the *Renegade's Blood*, however, their status is less established. The events on Ord Mantell and the subsequent ambush of her pirate fleet have brought Noira's competence into question. If she wishes to keep her crown (and mask), Noira requires powerful allies like the PCs on her side.

While the Veiled Sorority is more egalitarian than the Zann Consortium—and retirement is not an automatic death sentence—it's still a nest of vipers where no one is truly safe from intrigue and betrayal. Until the PCs show the skill and nerve to stand side-by-side with their newfound pirate friends, they must watch their backs both within the organization and without.

IN DEEP POODOO

Given the many opportunities for failure during **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the PCs may find themselves caught between the Zann Consortium and the Veiled Sorority. Egregious failure enrages Tyber Zann, especially if it results in Consortium losses. Aiding Venlana in the end especially marks the PCs as treacherous, extremely stupid, or both. The penalty for such acts is death, and Zann willingly devotes an entire account of the Consortium budget to making sure the Player Characters are hunted down like womp rats.

In such a case, PCs who are unwilling to flee from the Consortium may offer themselves to the Veiled Sorority. With their knowledge of the Consortium's plans, insofar as the Sorority is concerned, they are initially valuable. If the PCs prove to be less knowledgeable than they've let on, the Sorority has no qualms about liquidating them.

Of course, the Player Characters may attempt to put as much space between themselves and the Zann Consortium as they can. While this may be effective at first, the sins of the past always catch up with them. Zann's spiderlike patience is rivaled only by his cruelty, and he intends to balance the proverbial books, one way or another.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Outside of the major powers in **MASK OF THE PIRATE QUEEN**, the Player Characters have also encountered a number of smaller organizations and individuals along the way. Most prominently, crime lord Illo Vandin on Ord Mantell may be willing to throw additional assignments the PCs' way, depending on how successful they were in taking care of his business previously. Game Masters can develop him into a rising power as he moves into the void the Sorority leaves on that world, and possibly beyond into other systems. Even if the Sorority still remains in power somehow, Vandin can easily become a useful NPC when the GM needs to present new job opportunity's for the PCs.

Other NPCs can be developed into useful parts of other adventures as well. Greedy fence Krezo Wasanti may find that his path intersects with the PCs' again, and sabacc champion Micael Torval's Force sensitivity may come to the PCs'—or the Empire's—attention.

There is also the Pirate Queen's mask itself. The PCs may recognize the mask's value, and as mentioned in the **"What do you mean, 'Yes'?"** sidebar on page 91 attempt to seize the Veiled Sorority's power for themselves. The intrigues they face in their attempt to manage an entire criminal organization should be deeper and more treacherous than they've ever imagined, but could lead them into new adventures and conflicts also beyond their imaginations.

The background of the entire page is a dramatic illustration. At the top left, Darth Vader looms over a Rebel ship, his red lightsaber ignited. In the bottom left, a Rebel ship is being fired upon by an Imperial ship. In the bottom right, a Rebel pilot is shown in a dynamic pose, aiming a blaster. The central focus is the game itself, with its components spread out on a surface. This includes a large map made of modular tiles, several plastic figures (Rebels, Imperials, and a droid), various cards (some with Rebel and Imperial symbols), and dice. The overall color palette is dominated by the reds of the Empire and the oranges/browns of the Rebel ships, set against a dark, starry space background.

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